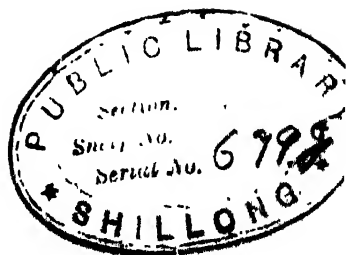


SREE CHAITANYA

BY
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PUBLISHED BY
THE POPULAR BOOK DEPOT
LAMINGTON ROAD,
BOMBAY 7, INDIA

First Published 1st. May, 1940

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Printed in India in the city of Calcutta by Sasadhar Chuckervorti
at the KALIKA PRESS LTD.

And

Published by—G. R. Bhatkal, for Popular Book Depot,
Lamington Road, Bombay 7, India

**TO
NON-CHAITANYITES**

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INTRODUCTION

Sree Krishna-Chaitanya was born in Bengal and preached his message of unalloyed devotion to and ecstatic love for Sree Krishna, the Lord. The erotic principles and unalloyed devotion preached by Sree Chaitanya reached their climax in the 'love in separation of Sree Rādhā for Sree Krishna.' This vital aspect of Sree Chaitanya's teachings, fully manifest in his own life, has not been dealt with in this volume for obvious reasons. This book is written for non-chaitanyite readers, particularly Europeans and Americans. The purpose in view has been to create an unbiased searching interest in the minds of those for whom it has been written.

Sree Chaitanya, who is more widely known in Bengal, Orissa and Assam as 'Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu,' changed the very substratum of the mentality of the peoples of Bengal and Orissa. To understand Bengal, and I may say Orissa, even today, it is essential to understand the message of Sree Chaitanya — a message that saved the Hindus from a whole-sale conversion by Islamic onslaughts. Unfortunately the life and precepts of Sree Chaitanya have been greatly

misinterpreted even by the professed followers of various sects of the Chaitanya-school itself. There are hardly any reliable and authentic book in English on the true teaching of Sree Chaitanya. Thakur Bhaktivinode wrote a number of books in Bengali, which are of immense value to the understanding of Chaitanya's philosophy and teachings; the non-Bengalis are not, however, benefited by them. Prof. N. K. Sanyal wrote a volume from an orthodox point of view of a chaitanyite; but he too could not complete the book in his lifetime. It is hoped that this book will serve as an introduction to the life and precepts of Sree Chaitanya.

I beg to acknowledge with thanks the help I received from Rev. S. Brajabasi, M.A., and Sarah de Laredo in preparing this book.

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Calcutta.
1st May, 1940.

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THE AUTHOR

SREE CHAITANYA

CHAPTER I

LIFE OF SREE CHAITANYA

On a calm and soothing evening when the Ganges, sacred river of the Hindus, was flowing rhythmically as a sweet running stream, and the wide green fields beyond became a peaceful pleasance beneath the rising moon Sree Krishna-Chaitanya was born. It was the 18th of February, 1486 A. C., at Sree Mayapore, situated on the eastern bank of the Bhāgirathi at a distance of about 70 miles to the north of Calcutta.

Sree Chaitanya came of a distinguished Brahmana family being descended, on both his father's and mother's side, from ancestors who were versed in the Scriptures of India. The

Hindu clergy are called Brāhmanas. The Brāhmanas had become an hereditary caste long before the time of Sree Chaitanya. The Brāhmanas to this day are universally honoured for their tradition of plain living and high thinking ; and have been the custodians of the priceless spiritual lore of the country.

Mayāpore (Nabadwipa) has been a great centre of Brāhmana influence and learning from remotest times. It was the most famous university-town in India in the fifteenth century. Jagannātha Misra, father of Sree Chaitanya, was a Brāhmana. He was very learned and very poor. Sachidevi, the mother of Sree Chaitanya, was the accomplished daughter of Nilāmbara Chakravorty, one of the most distinguished Brāhmana scholars of Nabadwipa, famed for his knowledge of astronomy and astrology.

Eight children had already been born to Sree Jagannātha and Sachidevi, and had all been snatched from the world by the hand of Death, the only surviving boy being Viswarupa. So, when this tenth and last child was born, Sachidevi called him "Nimai" thinking that Death would not touch this new-born baby.

He was called "Nimāi" also because he was born in a room beneath the branches of a Neem tree.

The matrons fondly named him "Gaurāṅga" because of his exquisite beauty. The scholars of Nabadwipa, which was then the Oxford of India, liked to address him as "Viswambhara", for his very appearance induced devotion. The citizens of Nabadwipa (Nadiā) were delighted with the charm of this child, who was to change the destinies of religious India in his later years.

He was given the name of Sree Krishna-Chaitanya when he became an ascetic or monk in his twentyfourth year on renouncing the world. The epithet "Sree", which means 'full of holy grace', is prefixed to the names of all holy personages and entities among the Hindus. Even from his cradle Nimāi evinced supernatural traits of character and his aptitude for the Scriptures.

One day the child Nimāi was joyously playing in the courtyard with a serpent which gradually coiled up while he lay on it under the hood. Sachi and Jagannātha were greatly alarmed, though the baby laughed happily. On

account of the clamour of the people, the serpent slowly glided away.

Everyone in the neighbourhood loved the child and always came to see him ; but when Nimāi saw people round him he would pretend to cry until the men and women chanted the Name of God.

One day while Nimāi was playing outside the compound of his father's house, he was kidnapped by two thieves who intended to rob him of his rich ornaments and carried him on their shoulders a long distance. Nimāi's parents raised a hue and cry when they found their darling was missing and a vigorous search was made throughout the neighbourhood. In the confusion nobody knew what to do. But by the power of God, the two thieves lost their way and returned to the same spot from where they had stolen the child, put him down and made good their escape.

One day his parents heard to their great astonishment the tinkle of anklets proceeding from the bare feet of their child, Nimāi, as he ran through the courtyard to fetch a book of

his father. This inspired Sachi and Jagannātha with the remembrance of Sree Krishna.

On another occasion the Divine Footprints of Vishnu were observed by many all over Nimāi's room. Vishnu is the name of the Divine Personality of the Absolute and He is said to have special marks of lotus, conch, wheel and club on the palms of His four hands as well as on the soles of His Divine feet.

Then again, one noon a Brāhmana pilgrim of great devotional fervour came to the house of Jagannātha Misra and was cordially received as a guest. According to the general customs of Brāhmanas in those days, the devotee himself wanted to cook his food. Amongst the Hindus in India a Brāhmana may accept cooked food prepared by another Brāhmana. This is very common in Bengal though in some Provinces there are restrictions even in this. The case of Jagannātha Misra's guest was not on this social bias. The spirit and mentality of a true devotee is to prepare things with his own hand for God first and then to accept that for himself as grace of God. Any way, this particular devotee cooked his food and sat down in meditation to offer the

food to Vishnu, Whom he loved and worshipped as the Divine Child, Gopāla. When he was thus in meditation, the little child Nimāi ran to him from the further courtyard and took a morsel out of what he was offering to Vishnu. It seemed to Sachi and Jagannātha that their child did wrong and prayed the Brāhmana to excuse him for his ignorance. The idea of these religious people is that if things are first eaten by any human being they should not be offered to God, but on the other hand nothing should be eaten by anybody until the food is offered to God, Who is the only Recipient of everything. The Brāhmana was requested to cook again, which he did. This time when he was about to offer his food to God, Sachi, the mother of Nimāi, kept the child in her lap so that he should not again disturb the Brāhmana. But when the devotee was deep in earnest meditation, invoking Vishnu as the Divine Child Gopāla out of the lap of Sachi did Nimāi jump and run to the Brāhmana and again took a mouthful of food to the utter chagrin of his parents. They were embarrassed. The Brāhmana approved of Nimāi eating the food he had cooked, but did not say

anything openly and cooked for the third time. The child was locked in a room. But when the third time the Brāhmana was in his meditation, Nimāi appeared before him and said, "You call me so affectionately to come to take your food and how can I refuse it?" So saying Nimāi unfolded his four hands and thus appeared before the closed eyes of the devotee.

These are not made-up stories. They are facts—more true than history—of the life and childhood of Nimāi, who was afterwards known as Sree Krishna-Chaitanya.

In all the apparently childish pranks of Nimāi there was a meaning. He used to cry aloud for such things as the moon and the stars in the sky and would not cease till others who would try to console him, began to chant the Name of Hari ! He never cared to eat anything that was not brought from the temple of Vishnu. Such little things were undoubtedly remarkable in the habit of Nimāi who was still only a child.

Nabadwipa was at this time a seat of Sanskrit learning more particularly advanced in Logic and Grammar. Brāhmanas who could read the Vedic language were known as Pundits

and usually had their bath and ablutions in the Ganges. They were mostly henotheists and given to the worship of many gods. Every fore-noon when these Brāhmanas came to the Ganges to worship the gods, Nimāi would annoy them greatly by plunging into the water and splashing water over them. When they complained to the boy's father, Jagannātha Misra wanted to chastise his son, but on approaching the boy the angry father found his body quite dry, just returning from school hungry and tired. Nimāi would often muse to tease the small girls, who when they complained against him to his mother, would be softened by the endearing and affectionate words of Sachidevi. Nimāi was not like the average boys, and his frolicsome sports, though outwardly resented, were immensely appreciated at heart by all who came in touch with him. Nobody had then recognised who he was. Divinity is not recognisable until it is revealed to the fortunate ones of the earth.

The *Ekadashi*-day, i. e. the eleventh day after every full-moon and new-moon is recognised as the Hindu 'Lord's Day' when Hindus observe a fast and devote more than usual time and

thought to the remembrance of God. Nimāi, though a boy, exacted a promise from his mother that every one in the family should observe a fast on these two days every month. This was an early expression of his religious faith.

The only surviving elder brother of Viswambhara, (for that was the name by which Nimāi was known among the scholars), was Viswarupa, who evinced the noblest qualities of mind and heart. The alluring world of utter materialism held no charm for him. He regarded his younger brother Nimāi as an incarnation of Krishna and loved him accordingly.

Advaita Achārya, a venerable man of advanced age, was the greatest theistic scholar at that time, living within two furlongs of the house of Jagannātha. He had a Sanskrit school where a few men of devotional aptitude used to gather round him. Viswarupa was being educated at this school. When Nimāi occasionally went there to fetch his elder brother all the true devotees there, would gaze wistfully at the supernatural beauties of the child, hoping that this Nimāi would one day dispel the darkness of atheism and that the firmament of religion

would shine with the bright light of pure devotion throughout the universe.

Pained at the irreligious habits of the people around him, Viswarupa renounced the world and adopted asceticism under the name of Sankarānya. The grief of Sachi and Jagannātha knew no bounds and thereafter all the love of his parents was dedicated to the boy Nimāi. The hearts of the devotees were filled with distress. Advaita thought that 'premature consolation would be a remembrancer of sorrow' and assured them, after the first inrush of grief had subsided, that Sree Krishnaji had already appeared in the world ; that the real cause of their affliction would cease for ever ; and that eternal divine bliss would soon be theirs.

From the moment of Viswarupa's renunciation, Nimāi gave up all his childish pranks, became very grave and gave every attention to his studies. At school he evinced an uncommonly sharp memory and exceptionally keen intellect. He quickly learned the simple and compound letters in Bengali and Sanskrit. Fearing that further studies might induce him to renounce the world like his elder brother,

Nimāi's father begged him to close his studies. The boy had a tremendous love of learning, however, and was much distressed by this request.

Nimāi resolved upon an indirect plan. According to the social customs of the Hindus, cooking earthen utensils when thrown away are considered unholy and anybody touching them would not be allowed to enter the house until he or she had taken a full bath in the river or pond near by. Indians, poor as they are, bathe every day in the rivers or big ponds, as they cannot afford to have bath-rooms as in European countries. They plunge into the rivers or ponds or lakes every day unless they are bed-ridden, chiefly because India's socio-religious life is so ordained. They may not enter their Temples or worship the Deities unless they have taken a full bath. Purity of body has a psychological effect on the purity of the mind.

One day, however, Nimāi seated himself upon a pile of these unholy discarded utensils. His mother implored him to come away from that heap of refuse ; but the boy would not move and replied : "Mother dear, how could the pots used

in cooking food for Vishnu (Godhead) be unholy ? The idea of holiness or unholiness is a delusion of the mind and they are only relative expressions of the same object. And how can I, Mother, distinguish one from the other when I am debarred from my studies ?” The words of the boy were significant but nobody then paid any attention to them.

Another day, Sachi gave him some sweets but he began to eat clay instead. When asked why he did so, Nimāi replied : “Why, Mother, I don’t see any difference between sweetmeats and clay—clay is only a transformation of our sweet food.” “Why can’t you see the wide difference, my child ?” Sachi asked. “The eating of cooked food nourishes our body while the eating of clay is detrimental to our health—one is not the other. There are other things like air, water, fire, etc. in the food besides earth ; earth is only a perverted shadow of the food I gave you.” “How can I know all these differences when I am denied all benefits of education ?” was the curt reply of Nimāi. It is to be noted here that the first reply of the young boy Nimāi was based on the pantheistic

idea—that the universe is only a transformation of the *Brahma* (Absolute), whereas Sachī, as a devotee, refuted his arguments on the lines of pure theism—that the universe was certainly not a transformation of the Absolute but was only the effect or result of a perverted shadow of the Potency of the All-powerful Personality of the Godhead.

Sachidevi related the two incidents in detail to her husband and implored him to look to the future welfare of their son which would otherwise be ruined for want of proper education and training. Nimāi was thus sent again to the Sanskrit school of Gangādās Pundit, soon after the performance of his investiture ceremony with the sacred thread. This ceremony is performed by Brāhmanas, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas at the age of eight, eleven and twelve respectively after which they are eligible for the study of the Vedas.

In his enthusiasm, Nimāi mastered all the intricacies of Indian Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric within a very short period. His wonderful acumen and clear understanding won for him the highest academic distinction and unanimous

applause from great scholars like Murāri Gupta, Kamalakānta and others who were puzzled by the problems he set in logic ; and being unable to stand before the extraordinary intelligence and power of argument of their junior, they often found it wiser to retreat.

At about this time, Jagannātha Misra dreamed on his death-bed that his son, Nimāi, had become a monk, and was dancing and chanting the Name of Sree Krishna with millions of his followers, all merged in the ecstasy of Divine Love. Jagannātha related the dream to his wife before he died. Viswambhara's grief was great at the sudden death of his father. The boy was in his twelfth year, but consoled his mother on her bereavement.

When a youth of about fifteen years of age, his name and fame had spread far and wide as "The Nimāi Pundit of Nabadwipa." He disapproved of the system of teaching then employed by the Pundits of Nabadwipa, and started his own school ; teaching his many pupils in a novel way.

He was a precocious genius, and set up as a teacher of Grammar in his sixteenth year. Soon

after, he married and as an ideal householder his door was ever open for charity and hospitality to chance-guests and monks. Hospitality in India in those days was a veritable tradition. India was, wisely or unwisely, indiscriminate in receiving strangers and giving them shelter in the house even if they happened to knock at the door at dead of night; though this tendency is slowly decreasing. At any rate, as ideal house-holders, Hindus still consider it a part of their daily religious life to be hospitable to strangers, particularly to monks. It was rather remarkable in the case of Nimāi Pundit.

He was sixteen years of age, and all the great and well-known scholars of Bengal had been defeated by this young Pundit on questions of Nyāya-Philosophy, Smṛiti, Grammar and Rhetoric.

One day Sree Nimāi entertained Iswara Puri, a Vaishnava monk of the Madhwa-School of Philosophy, which is "Dualism." Sree Nimāi had had a long talk with this monk discussing with all reverence and deference the subject-matter of a great Sanskrit work by Iswara Puri himself, entitled "*Krishna Leelāmṛita*". It was

some time after that Sree Nimāi accepted Iswara Puri as his spiritual Master when he met him next at Gayā—a place of pilgrimage of the Hindus in the Province of Bihar.

When Nimāi Pundit was about sixteen years of age, there was living in Kashmere one Keshava Bhatta, who had by that time defeated all scholars of the different Provinces in India in scholasticism. The name of Nimāi reached him from Bengal and he wanted to have his championship recognised by the well-known logicians of Nabadwipa. In his vanity he sought to defeat Nimāi at Nadiā. One fine evening when the silver moon-beams shone brightly out of the clear blue sky and played upon the waters of the Ganges, Nimāi Pundit made his way slowly to the riverside, where he met the greatest scholar of the North. Keshava Bhatta was inclined to sneer at the lad to whom he had been sent by all the elderly logicians of Nabadwipa.

“What can he know?” thought the Pundit of Kashmere; and addressing Nimāi Pundit, the famous scholar said arrogantly: “Nimai! you are only a boy and I am told that you are

a scholar. But on enquiry I find that you know only a little Grammar, which is a subject for children ! And even in that subject you teach only "*Kalp*" to your pupils ! How will you be able to follow my highly rhetorical poems ?" With a gentle smile Nimāi replied with the utmost modesty : "O great Pundit ! it is true I profess to teach Grammar to my pupils ; and though the subject is so simple, yet neither can I explain it clearly to my boys nor have they the capacity to understand the subject. You are, on the other hand, erudite and a master scholar of all the Scriptures, particularly poetry, whereas I am only a young student of Grammar. I shall, however, be happy if you will please compose a hymn in praise of the Ganges."

On the bank of the Ganges they seated themselves face to face. Vain at heart, Keshava with ease composed one hundred beautiful verses in an hour's time by dint of his poetic genius. Nimāi eulogised Keshava generously and asked him if he would explain one of the hundred verses he had just improvised in praise of the Ganges, himself repeating one of the verses. At this

exceptional feat of memory—for Nīmāi had correctly memorised the Slokas of Keshava Bhatta after listening to them but once, though they had been composed and spoken as quickly as if from memory—Keshava asked Nīmāi how could he have such an amazing memory? The young scholar replied that if it were possible for Keshava to compose a hundred verses in one hour by the grace of God, what wonder if he (Nīmāi Pandit) possessed such a memory by the blessing of the same Lord! Nīmāi next asked Keshava to point out the merits and demerits of a stanza which he had just repeated from among the hundred verses. Keshava replied that there could be no flaw in the particular stanza. On the other hand, its beauties lay in its alliteration and similes. Modestly Nīmāi Pundit again said, “It is true, your fame, as a great Poet, has gone far and wide—you are praised even by the gods. But if you will not take it ill, I fear, that if your verses, even in this particular one, be scrutinised, several defects will be found in them. I leave it to you to point out your own mistakes.” At this, Keshava sneered at him, asking what would a

young student of Grammar, like Nimāi, understand of the poetic beauties of his verses ? His verses were as correct as the Vedas, said he.

Calmly Nimāi Pundit stated : "All that you say is true from your point of view. It is also true that I am a student of Grammar. Even if I have not read Rhetoric, I have heard it read by others ; and from that knowledge, if you will permit me, without offence, I can broadly say that there are five defects and five merits in this particular stanza of yours which I have asked you to criticise. The rhetorical beauties are marred by the five inexcusable demerits. You have alliteration in the first three lines of the stanza with none in the fourth, which is the first flaw of a 'break'. You use '*Bhavāni-Bhartuh*', which means 'of the husband of the wife of Mahādeva' while '*Bhavāni*' itself means 'wife of Mahādeva' which, therefore, sounds like a second husband, and is an error of '*Contradiction*' according to the rules of Grammar. Thirdly, there is the fault of '*Redundancy*' in qualifying the verb '*Bibhāvati*'. The fourth and fifth defects are of Rhetoric. In two places you have placed the 'subject' after the 'predicate'

and in another place you have foiled the meaning by putting the 'unknown object' before the 'known one' in a compound of two words. As one single spot of white leprosy mars the beauties of a handsome body, so also ten merits of rhetoric in one verse are of no consequence if there be one defect.

"I shall now point out the five beauties in the composition of your verse, of which two are in the use of the words and the other are in the figures of speech. In the alliteration of the first three lines of the stanza, there is the art of composition of words. The same beauty is in the use of "Sree-Lakshmi"; thirdly, there is a simile; fourthly there is the figure of speech in tracing the source of the Ganges to the Lotus Feet of Vishnu—which is the reverse of how an ordinary Poet would describe the lotus in the Ganges, while here your beauty lies in describing the Ganges as having originated in the Lotus, with which the Feet of Vishnu are compared; fifthly, there is an inferential rhetoric. These are the few easily discernable merits and demerits of your verse, but on closer scrutiny, there will be found many more."

A large following of Keshava Pundit sat round him, and a few student-disciples of Nīmāi—the young man of only sixteen years, were by his side. Carefully, mildly and yet forcefully Nīmāi pointed out these merits and demerits of only one stanza of the hymn, whereupon the followers of Keshava Bhatta hung their heads, and down went the eyes of the great scholar. He had at last been defeated by a young boy—and before a great assembly! This had its desired effect on both sides. Keshava Bhatta, the greatest logician and scholar of his time in Northern India, realised that it was not possible for any ordinary intelligence to point out defects in his writings—there must be some Divine Power in the boy. His vanity was shattered. He soon realised that the ultimate object of learning was not wrangling pedantry which begets intellectual pride and vain glory, but devotional service to the Divine Lord, Who is the perfection of all knowledge. Devotional service to God is the normal function of all pure souls. Keshava Bhatta thus fell at the feet of Nīmāi and thenceforth became his staunch disciple. By vanquishing Keshava

Kashmeri at that time the most famous scholar in India, in open disputation shortly after, and by the victory in the literary tournament Nimāi won the reputation of being the most erudite scholar.

After this, Nimāi travelled in Eastern Bengal and many followed him in his chanting of the Transcendental Name of the Godhead, which mission he had just begun. On the bank of the river Padmā somewhere in Vikrampore, Nimāi Pundit met one Tapan Misra who first put him the questions on the 'Means' & 'End' of human birth. The scholar-preacher of Nabadwipa asked this Brāhmana-devotee of Vikrampore to meet him at Benares where he would answer his questions in detail. It is mentioned in the authentic book on the early life of Sree Chaitanya that he met Tapan Misra on the bank of the Padmā during his tour in Eastern Bengal. Vikramapore, situated on the Padmā, was a place of scholars; and even to this day the traditional love for scholasticism continues in this fertile piece of land in the district of Dacca surrounded on all sides by wide rivers. Vikrampore has given birth to

many a great scholar, eminent lawyer, world-famous scientist and soul-stirring religionist. It is, therefore, quite possible that Nimāi Pundit visited Vikrampur.

While he was away from home, his wife Lakshmi Devi died and he married his second wife Vishnupriyā, on his return from Eastern Bengal. The wedding ceremony was performed with great pomp and the expenses were borne by one Buddhimanta Khān, an influential citizen of Nabadwipa.

At the age of eighteen he went on a pilgrimage to Gayā ostensibly for the purpose of performing the funeral rites in honour of his revered father. Here he denounced once for all ritualism and elevationism and demonstrated his absolute submission to Vishnu by being initiated into the spiritual life by Iswar Puri—the monk who had previously visited his home as a guest. This event marked the turning-point of his career and radical were the changes in his life after this initiation as he was now fully imbued with the love of God. All the devotees of Nabadwipa were astonished at this sudden change in the life of Nimāi who had been

known as a speaker and rational scholar. All logical arguments were now swept away in a flow of Ecstatic Love for Sree Krishna. He was hardly recognisable as the same Nimāi Pundit who had defeated Keshava Bhatta, the greatest scholar of the North. Abstruse empiric reasoning, fallacious logic, vast erudition—all gave way to the fervour of his intense love for God.

When he returned home, he confided to his intimate friends how grieved he now felt at the separation from his most Beloved Krishnaji, of Whom he had had a glimpse on his way back from Gayā. He began to enquire of them how, where and when he would find his Beloved Lord. From this time onward he devoted all his activities to the preaching of his new message of Ecstatic Love for Krishna in separation.

In his own school he now began to teach his pupils that every word of any language—any sound in the world, must have its origin in the Original Word, i.e. the Transcendental Name of the Godhead, Whom he called Sree Krishna. He thenceforth began to preach to all about

the spiritual efficacy of the chanting of the Name of Krishna.

One Sreevāsa was a great devotee then living at Nadiā, where Nimāi used to hold prayers at his house every night. Deeply mortified at the non-devotional attitude of the people of their time, the devotees who assembled at the house of Sreevāsa earnestly prayed for an immediate Manifestation of the Godhead, whereupon Sree Nimāi revealed himself in all his magnificence and glory, power and beauty, intelligence and freedom, himself entering the Temple, and vouchsafed the boons solicited by the followers. One day when he was thus engaged in singing the Name of Sree Krishna surrounded by his followers, Nimāi revealed the Viswarupa-Form to Advaita Achārya in the manner in which Sree Krishna is described as having done before Arjuna, in the Geetā. Nimāi now began in all earnestness his mission of preaching the doctrine of the chanting of the Name of Sree Krishna.

At this time, two of his most intimate disciples Nityānanda and Thākur Haridās joined him. Nityānanda who was born at Ekachakrā

in the district of Birbhum in Bengal, the only child of his parents Padmāvati and Hārāi Pundit —left home at the age of twelve and after finishing his travels and pilgrimage on foot all over India, for twelve years, joined Nīmāi at Nadiā. Thākur Haridās who was a Musalmān by birth, had to suffer untold persecution at the hands of the empiricists for his natural love of chanting the Name of Kṛṣṇa, and came under the banner of “Nāma-Samkirtana” or congregational prayer, which was being preached by Nīmāi of Nadiā.

Nīmāi now made Nityānanda his lieutenant by revealing himself in a supernatural Form with Six Hands bearing the conch, disc, mace, lotus, bow and flute; next he manifested himself in a Four-armed Form with the flute in two hands and conch and disc in the other two; and lastly he appeared before Nityānanda, otherwise called “Nītāi”, as Sree Kṛṣṇa—yellow-robed and fair of complexion with the spiritual flute held to His Lips. At this Nītāi was transported and taking the mallet in his own hands, both Nīmāi and Nītāi revealed

themselves to Sachidevi as Krishna and Balarāma respectively.

Nimāi deputed Nitāi and Thākur Haridās to preach his message of the chanting of the Name of Krishna from door to door. In carrying out his wishes they once encountered the two notorious drunkards, Jagāi and Mādhāi, of Nabadwipa. These two brothers were of immoral character and downright hooligans, committing many sins. Resenting the sound of the Name of God, they assaulted the two preachers with stones, which drew blood from the forehead of Nitāi. But gentle was Sree Nimāi's method of preaching. So, Nitāi out of compassion for the misguided rogues embraced them. Their hearts were touched and they fell at the feet of Nityānanda and Haridās, who asked them to submit to Nimāi who had come, they said, to the world with the message of Divine Love. They obeyed.

On another occasion, when Nimāi was directing his followers who were engaged in dancing and chanting the Name of Krishna, one Suklāmbara Brahmacāry approached him, enquiring about the purpose and ways of

chanting the Name. Nīmāi explained to him that according to *Vṛihat-Nārādia-Purāna*, there could be no other way to redemption in this Kali Age (the present Age of discord and fight) except by chanting the Name of Hari. He further stated that in the Kali Age, the Lord had appeared in the world in the form of the "Name"—this Divine Word was in the beginning and would ever continue to the end. Only by the proper method of chanting the Name of God could the whole world attain the highest Bliss. This was an unchallengeable truth. Other processes of Jñāna-Yoga, Tyāga-Yog and forms of ritualistic worship, prescribed in the Shāstras, were not necessary in this Kali Age, if man would devotedly and without committing any of the ten transgressions, serve the Name of God by means of hearing, singing, chanting, and meditating after surrendering unconditionally to the grace of the Name Himself. One who would desire to chant the Name of Krishna should consider himself humbler than a blade of grass ; he should not seek self-praise and honour, but should pay due respect to others ; and be patient at any insults flung at him or

the obstacles and difficulties that might rise before him. As a tree does not oppose even when it is felled, or ask for water even if it be withering, but on the contrary offers shade and fruit to the very cutter while he is cutting it down, so also one who would chant the Name should smilingly face all possible opposition, without seeking anything from anybody, satisfied with whatever is easily attainable in life, and be kind and helpful even to the worst of enemies.

Thus Nimāi was carrying on with his mission in Nabadwipa. Every evening his disciples used to assemble at the house of Sreevāsa, and Nimāi would lead them in the congregational prayers. Only devotees and genuine followers would be allowed to enter the Prayer Hall; atheists, sceptics, agnostics, henotheists and pantheists would be kept out. One day a man named Mukunda Dutta, who was an admirer of monism, requested one of the disciples of Nimāi to enquire of him if he would ever be allowed to join his prayers and be redeemed. Nimāi sent word to the effect that as Mukunda would praise devotion before the devotees at one moment and

admire the monistic discourses of non-devotees the next, it would take long for him to enter the Kingdom of God. At this Mukunda began to dance with joy, because of the assurance given to him that he would one day be able to enter into God's Kingdom though after a long time. Sree Nimāi was pleased at his confidence and called him in to join in his prayers.

On another occasion the mother-in-law of Sreevāsa kept herself hidden in the Prayer Hall without the knowledge of anybody; but when the devotees assembled, Sree Nimāi did not begin his prayers saying that a challenging non-devotee must be hiding somewhere. At this the old lady was found out and asked to leave the room. Sree Nimāi explained that the grace of God could not be attained by an attitude of challenge, but by submission one should approach the grace of God. Nimāi was as much against pseudo-asceticism as against voluptuous luxury. Neither enjoyment nor renunciation would ever help one towards a realisation of God. Affectionate service rendered to Him is the positive and surest path.

One night when Nimāi and his devotees

were lost in the ecstatic dance and singing of the holy Name of Krishna, the only son of Sreevāsa was struggling hard against death. Sreevāsa's love for his Master was manifest in his perfect self-control and strict forbearance even when his only son was about to die. Sree Nimāi however went inside the house to the bed-side of the dying child, and found him dead. Sree Nimāi invoked the departed soul to re-enter the left-body and asked him to relate the region where souls go after leaving the mortal coil. The soul in the body of the son of Sreevāsh then told to the amazement of all about his previous births, that people die and be reborn according to their Karma at the Will of the Lord. Thus Nimāi pacified the grief of the inmates of Sreevāsh's family, and his son's body was then duly cremated.

Of the many miracles performed by Nimāi during these early years, it may be recorded that one day when his followers were tired and hungry after a long chanting-dancing procession through the streets of the city of Nadiā and along the bank of the Ganges, he placed a mango-seed into the earth and instantly a tree

grew, and produced 200 ripe fruits which he plucked and distributed to his followers. Regarding this miracle, as narrated in the authentic work *Chaitanya-Charitāmrita*, it is not clear however, whether it was an allegorical tree with the ripe fruits of Divine Love and Devotion, with no rind of fruitive Karma and no seed of dry Jñāna, or a material tree of mango-fruit.

Once an astrologer came to the house of Nimāi and told him before his disciples that he had been the Supreme Lord Sree Krishna in his previous birth. At this Nimāi smiled and said that formerly he was only a cowherd and by virtue of serving the cows then, he had now been born a Brāhmaṇa. Nimāi was always very modest.

His name and fame throughout the country roused jealousy in the hearts of some of the Pundits of Nabadwipa. They lodged a complaint against him with Chānd Kāzi, the Musalmān Governor of the city. The Kāzi caused great havoc among Sree Nimāi's disciples at which Sree Nimāi ordered a grand procession one evening which was joined by practically all the citizens of Nadiā. Nimāi took the lead

and passed through the most important streets of the city, singing the Name of Krishna and at last reached the house of the Kāzi who was frightened at the sight of the huge religious procession. The atmosphere reverberated with the Name of Krishna, and Nimāi assured Chānd Kāzi all safety. Thus pacified, the Kāzi promised not to disturb the followers of Sree Nimāi. Nimāi then spoke of the Divine Sound, which appealed to the Kāzi so much that he himself became a convert and began to chant the Name of Krishna. The whole country was astounded when the news spread that the Muhammedan Governor of Nabadwipa had become a disciple of Sree Nimāi Pundit. The truth, beauty and harmony of the teachings of Nimāi had now begun to regenerate the spiritual ideas of the nation. Even today at the tomb of Chānd Kāzi at Sree Mayāpore (Nabadwipa), on which stands a *Champaka*-flower tree from the time of the death of the Kāzi, both Hindus and Muhmmedans pay their homage to the great departed and there is perfect harmony between the two communities and the descendants of

the Kāzi are respectful to the followers of Sree Nimāi.

It is said that a prophet is not recognised in his own country, and there were several at Nabadwipa who did not appreciate the mission of Nimāi; yet the chanting of the Name of Krishna brought ecstatic joy to the hearts of the devotees. His all-embracing doctrine of Divine Love, which opened the gateway to the spiritual realm to one and all without distinction of caste, creed or community, did not find any response in the unbelievers, who began to scoff and even went so far as to threaten him with assault. Nimāi recognised the need for a desperate remedy. He resolved to renounce the world, and the news spread like wild fire in the city. In vain did his mother, wife and disciples try to keep him at Nabadwipa, and it was with dumb amazement that one wintry morning they actually beheld Nimāi accepting the ecclesiastical order and renouncing his little family and small town and going out into the wider suffering world in order to render the most permanent help to the fallen. The pathetic scene; the thought that the most beautiful face

and charming nature of Nimāi would no longer be at Nadiā, drew tears from those unbelievers who had formerly scoffed at his mission and they now all submitted to him ; begging his pardon for the offences committed by them against him and his devotees.

Sree Nimāi Pundit of Nadiā crossed the Ganges with Nityānanda, Chandrashekhara Achārya and Mukunda, and went to Katwā in the district of Burdwan. The call for a greater mission in life had come to him ; and neither the pathetic appeal of his old mother nor the charm of his young wife could keep him bound to his family. He cut all ties of worldly affinities and mudane relativities. Urged towards the fulfilment of his great mission, he was forced to ignore his relative duties and go out into the world to fulfil the absolute duty of his life, which laid in the dedication of himself at the altar of divine service by which humanity in general could be best served.

As by pouring water over the root, the whole tree can be fed, whereas by sprinkling water on the branches and leaves the tree ultimately withers away, so also by serving the Absolute—

the Supreme Lord—the whole universe is automatically served ; since all phenomena including humanity are encompassed in the Absolute-God ; but by serving humanity, which is only a part of the Whole, one is not sure of approaching the Absolute Reality. With this understanding of life, the Nimāi Pundit of Nadia formally renounced the world at the early age of twentyfour and became a monk-teacher or 'wanderer'. He was initiated into the ascetic's life by Sree Keshava Bhārati, who belonged to the order of monks instituted by Sree Sankara. Sree Keshava Bhārati was so struck with the personality of his disciple that he was persuaded to instruct him in the religion of Love for Sree Krishna, and named him "*Sree Krishna-Chaitanya*". He predicted that his disciple would impart to the world the knowledge of Krishna, thus proving the significance of his name.

Immediately after being initiated into the life of a monk by Sree Keshava Bhārati at Kātwā, Sree Krishna-Chaitanya became intoxicated with the Love of Krishna ; and with tears trickling down his cheeks, his body trembling with the

thought of separation from his Beloved Lord, he began to run towards Brindābana in quest of Śree Krishna. But Nityānanda cleverly led him across the Ganges and brought him to the house of Śree Advaita Achārya at Shāntipore. Thousands flocked to Shāntipore in order to have a chance to see the young monk, who was till the other day the greatest scholar of Nabadwipa. Sachidevi also came to see her darling. Śree Chaitanya bowed at the feet of his mother and sought her blessing, saying : "Mother I have accepted the life of a monk and all canons forbid me to remain at home. But I cannot do anything against your will. Advise me, therefore, that I may be able to observe the rules of a monk's life and at the same time do not wound your feelings. At this Sachidevi gave permission to her child to go to Puri, so that her son might remain an ideal monk and she also get the news of his dearest son.

Nimāi Pundit became a monk in order to put himself beyond the possibility of social opposition in propagating the Name and Religion of Love for Krishna, as the ascetics are the authorised teachers of religion among the Hindus

and have to be unreservedly honoured by the laity irrespective of caste or creed.

Nimāi Pundit had already begun to preach his religion publicly at Nabadwipa ever since his return from Gayā. For six years he had been zealously propagating the creed among the citizens of his native town. The powerful orthodox Brāhmaṇa community of Nabadwipa then took alarm at the rapid growth of what they viewed as a new form of heresay, and organised an orthodox social opposition against Nimāi. They even attempted unsuccessfully to obtain the aid of the Muslim Governor of the locality for putting down the practice of the religion by representing it as a movement against Islam. Sree Nimāi broke away from the prevailing orthodoxy and preached his religion without any distinction of caste or community. After his renunciation of the world and in order to avoid social dissension, Sree Kṛishṇa-Chaitanya left Nabadwipa and took up his residence at Puri in Orissa.

CHAPTER II

LIFE OF SREE CHAITANYA

(Second Half)

The Message of Divine Love was preached by Sree Krishna-Chaitanya, who was a contemporary of Martin Luther. Martin Luther wanted to reform Christianity in the West, whereas Sree Chaitanya told the children of the world that reformation was never possible in the absolute sense—that there could be no innovation in Religion. Religion is eternal, as God is eternal. Religion cannot be cast in the mental mould of men in order to give it a shape according to their choice. When God and His Messengers come to the world, they do not bring us a new religion but only put the oldest thought in the newest garment. Whenever there is an attempt to create a religion to suit our worldly needs and circumstances, there is a deviation from the true

and eternal religion of all souls. Sree Chaitanya re-established the pure conception of the Eternal Religion by eliminating the foreign alloy of physical and mental associations.

After renouncing the world, Sree Krishna-Chaitanya left his kith and kin and went to Puri. Renunciation in India among the Hindus is rather different from the renunciation of monks in Europe. When Hindus renounce the world for the service of God, they are expected not to meet or live among their old friends and relatives any more. Sree Chaitanya did the same by practising in his own life all that he preached.

In those days, Puri was very far from Nadiā the birthplace of Sree Chaitanya, and he had to walk all the long distance. Vāsudeva Sārba-bhauma Bhattāchārya (an ancestor of the author of this volume) was the foremost logician in his time, an erudite scholar of the pantheistic school of Philosophy who was living in Puri as an adviser to the King of Orissa. This pedantic scholar of pantheism was the first to become acquainted with the young monk, who had come all the way from Bengal to Puri in quest of the Most Beloved Lord of his heart.

and caught him in his arms when the monk fell in a swoon in front of the temple of Jagannātha—the Lord of the Universe. When Sree Chaitanya had regained consciousness by his devotees chanting aloud the Name of Sree Krishna, the great scholar was fascinated by the charming, gentle and beautiful personality of the young monk. He took compassion on him and began to look after his comfort.

“Salutation to Nārāyana the Lord!” said Śarabhauma to Sree Chaitanya, who replied: “May you have faith in the Supreme Lord Sree Krishna.” At this the pantheistic scholar realised that the young monk must belong to the Vaishnava school of thought. There are two sections amongst the Hindu monks—those who belong to the Sankara school of philosophy and believe that every entity is identical with *Brahma*, the Absolute, are known as *Ekdandins*; they hold the aphorisms “I am *Brahma*”, “Thou art *Brahma*”, “*Brahma* is One”, “There is nothing but *Brahma*” etc., while the Vaishnava-monks are known as *Tridandins*, who believe in the eternal existence of the Supreme Personality of Divinity and the eternal existences of the

individual souls ; they hold the view : “God is the Supreme Being”, “He is the Eternal Lord”, “All souls are His eternal servants” etc.

Gopinātha Achārya, the brother-in-law of Vāsudeva Sārbabhauma, however, introduced Sree Krishna-Chaitanya to him, saying that Sree Chaitanya was the Incarnation of the Supreme Lord Sree Krishna. At this, the disciples of Sārbabhauma challenged Gopinātha, and asked him how he came to know that Sree Chaitanya was the Supreme Divinity ? “The wise realise the Supreme Lord from His signs,” replied Gopinātha. The disciples argued that God could be known by inferences drawn from phenomena by the application of the physical and mental senses. Gopinātha held the view that Divinity could not be ascertained by human inferences, they being limited and defective, and much depended on the Grace of the Lord Himself—without His Grace none could ever realise God. Then turning to Sārbabhaum Gopinātha said : “Though you are a great master of the Scriptures, and there is hardly any scholar who can equal you in scholasticism, yet you have, I am afraid, received no grace of God.

and therefore you fail to realise the Divinity in Sree Chaitanya. I do not blame you ; because the Scriptures declare that the knowledge of God is denied to those who are blinded by the vanities of worldly erudition." Sārabhauma retorted : "What is the proof that you have been so blessed by God, Achārya ?" Gopinātha answered in reply : "The Subjectivity of the Divinity cannot be recognised by the objective thinking of individuals. The Truth is Self-effulgent ; from the knowledge of a substance, the substance is known ; and this knowledge also depends on the Grace of God, Who is the Real Substance. All the signs of Divinity are manifest in the body of this young monk Sree Chaitanya, and yet you do not realise him. This is called Māyā—the Deluding Potency of the All-powerful God. An owl cannot see the rays of the sun."

Nevertheless there was vain-glory in this Sārabhauma and he addressed Sree Chaitanya, saying : "You are a monk. How will you be able to maintain your order in such a young age ? You should have a whole-time engagement in the reading of the Vedānta." Sree

Chaitanya said : "It is extremely kind of you to instruct me in this way. I am a young monk, and I greatly value your advice and affection. Do please tell me what is best for me. If you think that I should listen to your exposition on the Vedānta, then please explain the aphorisms to me"—so saying Sree Chaitanya took his seat, and Śārababhauma began to explain the aphorisms of the Vedānta, the essence of the Vedās, which are the Scriptures of the Hindus. Not realising the spiritual personality of Sree Chaitanya—not even remembering that this young monk had already defeated the greatest scholar of the North when he was only a boy of sixteen—that he had for a long time been recognised as the unchallengeable logician of Bengal, filled with the vanities of empiric knowledge, Vasudeva Śārababhauma was anxious to display his knowledge of the Scriptures which he thought would be helpful to a young monk who had just taken his first step on the road of a spiritual life ! He began to expound the Vedānta strictly on the lines of the pantheistic thought in which he was no doubt a master, and continued for seven consecutive days. Sree Chaitanya, however,

remained taciturn, while the interpretations went wide of the mark. Noting his silence, Śārabhauma wondered whether the young man was able to follow his scholarly expositions, and asked him accordingly. Śree Chaitanya replied that he could understand the original perfectly but not the commentaries, as they were all full of mistakes. This was indeed a blow ! How dare this young man declare all his explanations of the Vedānta to be absolutely wrong ! Did the young monk from Bengal know anything better ?

Calmly Śree Chaitanya first refuted all the points made by Śārabhauma and then himself explained the whole of the Vedānta on the basis of pure theism. Śree Chaitanya said : "A commentary on the aphorisms of the Vedānta should explicitly explain the meaning of the Vedānta, but your explanations only hide instead the meaning thereof. Vyāsa's Vedānta-sūtras aimed at clarifying the real and direct purpose of the Upanishads, but you have been trying to ignore the real purpose of the Upanishads as depicted in the Vedānta and giving importance and preference to the indirect and subservient

objects therein. When the denotation of a word or expression is clear, it is often misleading to take recourse to metaphors, and in your exposition you have often ignored the intent of the aphorisms. Of the four logical evidences, viz. perception, inference, history and sound, the last one is the most valid and authentic. The direct meaning and purpose of the Śruties is, therefore, the most authoritative. If the Vedic truths be approached metaphorically, the arguments will come under the heading of 'inferences', and that will destroy the self-evident validity of the Scriptures. The real meaning of the aphorisms of the Vedānta is as clear as the rays of the sun. Impersonalists have tried to cloud that light by their mental speculations. The Vedās, the Upanishads, the Vedānta and the Purāṇas have all established the *Brahma*. When that "Great" *Brahma* is quantitatively approached, He is known as *Iswara* or God; again, when *Iswara* or God is qualitatively realised, possessed with all-power, all-glory, all-majesty, all-beauty, all-might and all-wisdom,* then that *Brahma* is known as *Bhagavān*. *Brahma* and *Bhagavān*

are therefore one. When some of the Upanishads declare *Brahma* to be impersonal, thereby they only deny the material form of the Divinity and establish the transcendental personality. In order to understand correctly the real meaning of the Upanishads and the Vedānta, Vyāsa gave his own commentary in the form of the Purāṇas—Sreemad Bhāgavatam is the most authentic commentary on the Vedānta. It is, therefore, essential to study the Vedānta in the light of the Bhāgavatam. Vyāsa is the writer of the Vedānta-sūtras, and he has given his own commentary on them in the Bhāgavatam; and therefore there can be no denying the fact that the Bhāgavatam truly explains the real meaning of the Vedānta." So saying, Sree Chaitanya recited a sloka from the Bhāgavatam. Śārabhauma was greatly interested in that sloka and requested Sree Chaitanya to explain. Sree Chaitanya, however, desired Śārabhauma to give his own interpretation first, which the great scholar did in nine different ways. Sree Chaitanya praised him immensely, and then gave his own meaning without touching any of

the nine different explanations putforth by Śārababhauma.

Śārababhauma was astounded and gazing at the young man in front of him from foot to head, gravely thought over what Sree Chaitanya had said and then fell at his feet. Spontaneous hymns in Sanskrit in praise of Sree Chaitanya issued from his lips and he remained for some time on his knees absorbed in prayer when Sree Chaitanya appeared before him unfolding four arms and revealed his divine manifestation to him. All the pedantic vanities of the old scholar were washed away—his heart was purified by the awakening of devotional fervour and he bowed his head at the feet of Sree Chaitanya and thenceforth became one of his staunch disciples. With the conversion of Vasudeva Śārababhauma, the pantheist, the whole of Orissa rallied to the banner of Divine Love, and Pure Devotion which was brought by Sree Chaitanya. The people of Orissa became followers of the young monk.

During those days the dearth of pure theism was much greater in Southern India than in the North owing to sectarianism and rigid

caste-rules. To deliver the people of the South from the prison-house of such narrow spiritual confines, Sree Chaitanya now began his mission to the Deccan. He had only one attendant with him and left Puri on foot. He first arrived at Chicacole in the Ganjam District and went to the Temple of Sree Kurma. Thousands gathered round him when he chanted the Name of Krishna and they all followed him in the path of devotion. A leper came to him crawling upon his breast in order to see him. Through the teeming crowd Sree Chaitanya rushed towards the man who was suffering from an extreme stage of leprosy, and embraced him. The crowd was horrified at this sudden act of Sree Chaitanya; none had wished to see the leper touched by him, but a moment later, they all saw the leper emerge from the warm embrace of Sree Chaitanya an exceptionally handsome youth—all his leprosy vanished at the divine touch of Chaitanya. No longer a leper, he regained his feet and began to dance in ecstasy, chanting the Transcendental Name of Sree Krishna.

Krishna-Chaitanya proceeded further South. From Chicacole he went to Simhachalam near

Waltair and then reached the banks of the Godāvory at Rājāhmundry. Crossing the river he met at the bathing-ghat at Kovvur the Governor of the Province Rāi Rāmānanda, with whom Sree Chaitanya had a long and lively philosophical discussion on the subject of the highest object of human life and how to attain it.

The very sight of the Godāvory river reminded Sree Chaitanya of Vrindābana, the pastoral home of Sree Krishna, and he was overwhelmed with joy. Rāmānanda Rāi, the Governor of the Province came to the place to have his usual bath in the river and was charmed to see the beautiful appearance of Sree Chaitanya. Sree Chaitanya had already learnt about Rāmānanda the devout Vaishnava, born in a low caste Sudra family, and ascertaining his identity greeted him in the most cordial way. Rāmānanda expressed his surprise at seeing the crowd that had already gathered there inspired, as it were, by the sight of the monk and all singing the Name of Krishna.

Later in the day they met, and Sree Chaitanya said to Rāmānanda : "Please recite

the verse that goes to fix the object that should be attained by one who wishes for his real good." Rāmananda felt very shy, and modestly replied : "What am I before you ? I know nothing about religion and the Scriptures. But I feel I have your blessings, and am inspired. I shall therefore, say all that you will prompt me to speak. I am the flute, and you are the player. I am in your hands." So saying, he proceeded to reply to the questions put forward by Sree Chaitanya. Rāmananda said : "Habitual performance of duties incumbent on us in this world gives devotion to Vishnu. Vishnu is the Supreme Person ; His worship is performed by one who observes the rules and principles of *Varna* and *Ashrama*: There is no other means of pleasing Him."

The highest object of life should be to please God. In India people were divided into four *Varnas*—the Brāhmanas, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras ; and the four *Ashramas* of a man's life are *Brahmacharya* or the stage of celibacy of a student, *Garhasthya* or family life, *Vanaprastha* i.e. a life of retirement in the forest, and *Sannyasa*, which is a life of renunciation

and exclusive contemplation of God. "It is our imperative duty", said Rāmananda, "to observe the rules and principles laid down by the Scriptures regarding *Varna* and *Ashrama*. If we act up to them, we attain our object. Their violation means damnation and eternal hell-fire."

This is the position of a worldly moralist who does not speak in terms of one in Goloka, the eternal place of the Supreme Being and His inner and intimate circle of devotees. The unworthy desires and actions are eliminated, but the standpoint is mundane all the same. Hence it appertains to an outward aspect of the object. So Sree Chaitanya told him to delve deeper into the subject.

Rāmananda said : "Dedicating all our actions to Krishna is the highest object of attainment. 'Whatever you do, eat, sacrifice, donate or whatever penances ~~do~~ you perform dedicate all these to me, said Sree Krishna in the Geeta.'" There might be scope for doubt regarding the personal nature and impersonal nature of Vishnu of the Karmīns. This passage eliminates the impersonal idea of the Divinity by the emphatic "Me" in the said verse. The aspirant has mundane

affinities, does things from mundane feelings and motives ; but he simply dedicates these to God, Who is super-mundane ; but when he rises above this status, and soars higher, he shakes off the tangles of morality and immorality on a relative mundane plane. Hence Sree Chaitanya told Rāmananda to speak of something higher, and Rāmananda said : "Renunciation of one's own duties as prescribed by the Shāstras and dedicate oneself wholly to God is the goal. He who knows that the merits and demerits of all worldly transactions are determined by divine mandates still ignores them for God's service is the best man. 'Renounce all dharmas and take refuge in Me alone—I will free you from all sins—you need not repent,' says Sree Krishna in the Geeta."

A man rises above mundane affinities by performing duties according to the injunctions of the Scriptures. He thereby reaches the region between the mundane world and the inner world of the Lord. Though he is perforce freed from worldly trammels and bonds, still he remains outside the inner sphere. He has not a sight of the personal God, but wanders in the domains

of impersonality and uncertainties. Hence he has not yet reached the good, and so Rāmānanda pointed out devotion with an admixture of Jñāna, knowledge, as the goal. But this also does not appertain to the inner sphere of the Transcendental Plane. He has not a definite conception of the Absolute—the Supreme Reality. His mental functions have still a centrifugal tendency. This also, therefore, cannot be the highest goal of the absolutely pure soul; particularly because, though the aspirant has severed worldly ties, still he has not yet been able to render direct personal service to the Supreme Being. So Sree Chaitanya spoke of it as something eternal, and requested Rāmānanda to proceed further.

Rāmānanda declared : “Devotion or Bhakti, devoid of Karma and Jñāna or Knowledge, is higher. Those who have given up all effort at Knowledge, abide by the path prescribed by the devoted, submit wholly to God, listen to what devotees speak of God, can have God within their reach, though none other can.” Sree Chaitanya acknowledged it as ‘something’ appertaining to the inner sphere. Here the

aspirant has attained the region of pure devotion of absolute faith, attraction towards devotees, service with devotion, freedom from evils, incessant connection with Divinity, taste for service of God and attachment to Him.

Rāmānanda was asked to speak of something further, and he said : "Devotion saturated with love is the highest object of attainment." Food and drink taste well as long as there are great hunger and thirst, so one devoted to Krishna, the Friend of the poor and the afflicted, would have his heart molten when His worship with the various offerings is performed with love. A mind saturated with devotion to Krishna must be purchased wheresoever it might be available ; 'greed' is its only price ; millions of lives spent in the performance of good deeds cannot give it. Here is a line of demarkation between two sorts of service—one prompted by the rules of life laid down in the Shāstras, and the other by spontaneous love for Krishna. In the initial stages of pure and unalloyed devotion, there is no established relationship between Krishna and the devotee. When devotion gets deeper, the devotee feels that Krishna is his own—his

Master ; he becomes His willing slave. The very mention of the Name of Krishna frees a man from all evils ; what, then, remains to be desired by his servants ? ‘When will all my mundane desires be destroyed by incessant service to Thee, my Lord ! and I shall have my mind tranquillised and enjoy the highest bliss ?’

In the devotion of a servant, there is reverence and awe, but little intimacy and no equality. So Sree Chaitanya said : “This is to the point. Proceed a bit further.” Rāmananda said : “The love of a friend entertained by a devotee is the highest. The boys of Vraja had attained the highest merit, because they played with Him Who is the Highest Bliss to the good, the Highest Deity to those who regard themselves as most privileged by having attained the position of His servants, and a mere boy to those who are in the region of hallucination.”

Chaitanya said : “This is good ; but proceed further.” Rāi said : “Parental love for Krishna is the highest. There is more affection added to intimacy. What good things had Nanda done ? and what good things had the fortunate Yasoda done that God Himself sucked her

breast ? Neither Brahmā nor Siva nor even Lakshmi, who is always with Him, Who gives salvation, was favoured as much as Yasoda, the Gopi."

Sree Chaitanya said that this was better, and wanted to hear better still. Rāmananda said : "The love of the consort is the highest love. In this, there is nothing concealed between the lovers. The divine pleasure derived by the Gopis when Krishna held them with his arms is far superior to that enjoyed by Lakshmi and the goddesses of heaven. Krishna appeared in their midst with a smiling face, in yellow dress, decorated with garlands and with an appearance that fascinates even the god of love—the Gopis alone had that privilege. There are various ways and means to the attainment of Krishna ; but the manner and degree of intimacy vary. For each individual his own aptitude is the highest for him ; but when a comparison is made, there is a difference. The highest pitch of love and devotion is attained in consort-hood. All the attributes of the sky plus some more attributes are found in air ; again, all the attributes of the sky and air are found in fire ;

this addition of attributes go on till earth is reached which has the largest number of attributes. Similarly, the love for Krishna as the Sweetheart has the highest attributes inclusive of the affection of parents, the intimacy of friends and the devoted service of the servants. This love enables the devotee to have the fullest and most intimate possession of Krishna. The *Bhagavatam* says that Krishna is subdued by this love. Devotion unto Him gives emancipation and eternal life of bliss. Affection and love alone can lead one to God. It is the determination of Sree Krishna, the Supreme Lord, to reciprocate the service of the devotee fully ; but even He is unable to repay adequately the love of the Gopis. Krishna said to the Gopis, 'Your love for me is absolutely pure. I cannot with my own efforts discharge my dues to you, because you have severed all for Me. So please satisfy yourselves with what you have done.' It is true that the beauty of Krishna is the culmination of His sweetness, still it is enhanced in the company of the Gopis of Vraja."

Sree Chaitanya said : "This love for Krishna is the highest object of attainment—there is no

denying it. Still, please tell me if there is something higher." Rāi replied : "I have not till today known any one who can ask about something higher. Rādhā's love is the highest. All the Scriptures speak of Her greatness. In the *Padma Purāna*, one reads 'of all the Gopis, Rādhā was the dearest to Krishna'. *Bhāgavatam* says, 'She has undoubtedly heartily worshipped the Supreme Lord Sree Krishna as is evident from the fact that He Who can be known from the Scriptures alone has left us (the Gopis) and taken Her to the most secret place.' "Speak further," said Sree Chaitanya, "the more do you speak the more pleasure do I derive. The most wonderful stream of nectar flows from your lips." Sree Krishna disregarded all the Gopis and moved away with Rādhā ; if there be regard for others, love cannot display in its fullest perfection ; the depth of His love is proved by His desertion of all the best beloved Gopis for Rādhā's sake."

Rāmananda Rāi said : "Hear, then, of the greatness of Rādhā's love. There is nothing in the universe that can stand comparison with it ; Krishna left the most delightful *Rāsa-dance*

with the Gopis and wandered lamenting throughout the forest. It happened thus : Krishna was dancing with the Gopis ; He assumed as many bodies as there were Gopis and with each Gopi there was dancing a Krishna ; Rādhā was only one of them ; She thought that Krishna regarded Her as only one of the Gopis and paid only as much attention to Her as to other Gopis ; She left the place, and Krishna could find no pleasure in the dance without Her, though He had the most earnest desire for it ; the very idea of *Rasa* without Rādhā could find no place in His heart ; millions of Gopis could give Him no pleasure if Rādhā was not there. This shows the superiority of Rādhā's love for Krishna."

Sree Chaitanya said : "Now I learn the secrets for which I came to you—the means and end of devotion. Now please tell me what exactly is meant by 'Krishna', 'Rādhā', 'Love' and 'Ecstatic love', as none else knows them." Rāi replied : "I know nothing about them—I only speak what You inspire within me. You are God Yourself and make Yourself visible to me out of sheer kindness." In his usual modesty

and hiding his identity, Sree Krishna-Chaitanya replied : "I am a dry philosopher and ascetic ; I know nothing of devotion ; my association with Sārabhauma purified my mind and I asked him about the secrets of the sweetness of devotion to Krishna. He replied that he had no knowledge of Krishna and that you were the only man who knew it and you were not then at Puri. Hence I come to you, but unfortunately you show me honour as I happened to be known as a monk ; you seem to feel some delicacy in giving me instructions, but you need have no hesitation. For, he who knows Krishna is the proper Master ; to whatever caste he belongs matters not."

Rāi said : "You are the Supreme Lord come to the world as a world-teacher, and therefore teach me by Your own example how one should be humble at heart in search of God. I proceed further in obedience to Your Command. Krishna is the Supreme Lord ; all the Incarnations or Divine Descents spring from Him ; He is the source of all things in the universe ; all the infinite worlds and innumerable Avatars (Divine Descents) reside in Him ; He has a

Transcendental Body of eternal existence, infinite knowledge and bliss, and appears as the Son of the King of Vraja ; He is full of majesty, power and joy ; He has no beginning, and is the Cause of all causes ; He is the supermundane adolescent God of Love in Vrindāvana ; He is worshipped there with the incantations, called *Kāmabija* and *Kāmagāyatri* ; His beauty attracts the male and the female, and all beings sentient and insentient ; it fascinates even His Own Self so much that He is disposed to embrace His Own Body—this in short is 'Krishna', as He manifests Himself to the devotee.

"Now let me speak of 'Rādhā'. Krishna has infinite powers. Of these what is known as *Hladini* (That which gives joy) Potency is exercised by Him for His Own enjoyment as well as that of the devotees. Its essence is Love, the pith of which is called *Mahabhava*. 'Rādhā' is the embodiment of this *Mahabhava*. Rādhā's Whole Body is made of Love for Krishna. Her only function is to fulfil the desires of Krishna. She has lots of handmaids ; but they spring from Her for the enjoyment of Krishna and are

a part and parcel of Herself. Krishna's love for Rādhā is like the overflow of sweet scent; Her Body is made brighter by baths in the streams of kindness, youth and beauty; Her clothes and ornaments consist of various phases of love for Krishna, which cannot be expressed in words. She thinks of Krishna, speaks of Krishna, hears of Krishna and disports Herself for the pleasure of Krishna. Even Satyabhāma, the most beloved wife of Krishna, envies Her lot; the most beloved Gopis of Vraja learn the art of loving from Her; the highest goddesses desire to have Her beauty; Arundhati, who is known for her chastity, is eager to learn it from Her; even Krishna cannot count Her good qualities; how, then, can an ordinary man know Her? She is the Guru or Teacher of highest Love."

Chaitanya said: "Now I come to know the nature of the love of Rādhā and Krishna; relate to me the intensity of Their Love". Rāi said: "Krishna is witty, adolescent, active, devoid of anxiety and controlled by the Sweetheart. He disports Himself with Rādhā incessantly in the bower of Vraja and thus spends His early youth in the most admirable manner."

Chaitanya wanted him to say something more secret. Rāi continued : "My intelligence cannot proceed further ; still I shall speak of the enjoyment of One of the Lovers in the absence of the Other—the ecstasy that cannot be felt if there be no separation." Then Rāi Rāmānanda sang a few lines of his own composition and Chaitanya was so overwhelmed with the intensity of his feelings that he held his hand on Rāi's lips and stopped him and said : "By your grace I now come to learn the highest goal attainable ; but nobody can attain it without efforts in the proper direction ; let me know it."

Rāmānanda said : "This goal cannot be attained even by service as the friend or parent. It is the handmaids of Rādhā alone that know it. The super-material amours of Rādhā and Krishna come within the ken of those who submit themselves wholly to those handmaids who conduce to their enjoyment, which though self-manifested and all-pervasive, cannot unfold its beauty without them, just as God's godhood does not display itself without those creations where his powers were chiefly manifested. The nature of these handmaids is unspeakable. They do

not seek to enjoy Krishna ; their only happiness lies in the joy of Rādhā and Krishna. Rādhā is, as it were, a Creeper of Love for Krishna, and the handmaids its leaves, flowers and twigs. If the pastime of Krishna water the Creeper with His nectar, the branches enjoy them a million time more than if they had been separated from the Creeper and watered individually. Their mutual love pleases Krishna. There is nothing gross or material or mundane in it. It is called amour simply because there is apparently some outward similarity between this Divine Love and carnality. Lust seeks one's own pleasure, whereas Divine Love aims at the enjoyment of Krishna alone. The Gopis indulge in the amorous pastimes not for self-satisfaction but simply because Krishna likes it on the Transcendental Plane. Some grow covetous of this selfless love of the Gopis. They have not to follow the precepts of the Scriptures, but they devote themselves wholly to the service of Krishna. They follow the paths of the Gopis and attain Krishna the Son of the King of Vraja. They worship Him as the Friend or the Consort and are endowed with bodies suited to that service.

The Srutis (Upanishads) followed that path, obtained bodies like those of the Gopis and attained the Goal." So saying Rāi Rāmananda stopped.

This unparalleled discourse on the means and end of a spiritual life is the most luminous passage in the history of devotional philosophy in India, which has been very explicitly and beautifully recorded in the *Chaitanya-Charitāmrita*, the most authentic work on Sree Chaitanya. Indeed this marvellous discourse and the submission of the Governor, Rāi Rāmananda, to the ardent discipleship of Sree Chaitanya revolutionised a whole out-look of religious life of the people of the Province of Rājahmandry and Orissa of that time, which influence continues even today in that Province.

Sree Chaitanya then went on further South and at last reached Trichinopoly where he stayed with Venkata Bhatta of the Rāmānuja School of 'Distinctive Monotheism'. The Bhatta-family accepted Chaitanya as their Divine Master. Tridandi Swāmi Prabodhananda Saraswati as well as the son of Venkata, Sree Gopāla Bhatta Goswāmi, embraced the cult of

Sree Chaitanya, both of whom wrote several masterly and authentic works on the teachings of Sree Krishna-Chaitanya. This Gopala Bhatta was one of the Six Goswamins, who were the most important missionary-disciples of Sree Chaitanya.

Down to Cape Comorin Sree Chaitanya carried his message and brought with him from the temple of Adikesava, near Trivendrum, one wonderful work, *Brahma-Samhita*, on the conception of the Godhead, written in Sanskrit on the walls of the temple. Only the 5th Chapter of the work is now available and has been published with an English translation by my Master.

Sree Chaitanya then visited Udipi in the Malabar coast, the birthplace of Sree Madhva—the Founder of the School of 'Dualism', and returned to Puri through Central India. This tour in the South took him two years. It is difficult to realise what a wonderful pilgrimage Sree Chaitanya made during those years, converting millions of people to the belief in pure devotion to and love of Krishna—the Divine Attractor of all souls. The main theme of his preaching was to establish 'Unalloyed Devotion'

as both the means and the end of all activities, he wanted the people to understand the uselessness of dry wisdom and but disinterested actions. The supremacy of the Transcendental Personality over the Impersonal or Neuter Aspect of God, as conceived by pantheists, was explained to one and all. Wherever he went, he preached the super-excellence of the Transcendental Name of God and the chanting of the Name as the highest form of devotion. In his tour to the South, Sree Chaitanya attracted many Buddhists, Jains, Jñānins (Salvationists) and Karmins (Elevationists) to the cult of Bhakti or that form of devotion which is not jeopardised by the performance of Karma and Jñāna.

On his return to Puri, Sree Chaitanya received many very important scholars of different casts as his disciples, Pratsaparudra, the King of Orissa, being one of those.

When the news reached Bengal of the return of Sree Chaitanya to Puri, a huge party of devotees from Bengal started on foot to meet their most beloved Lord and Master. Thakur Haridas, who was a Musalman by birth, was one of the party.

Every year a festival is held at Puri when the Deities of the main temple of Jagannātha are carried in three different new and beautifully decorated chariots to another temple at a distance of about two miles when millions of Hindu pilgrims come to Puri to witness the drawing of the chariots with the Deities. Just before this car-festival, the numerous devotees from Bengal arrived at Puri and were delighted to see the most beautiful face of Sree Chaitanya, after their long separation. He joined the car-festival with his innumerable followers from Bengal and Orissa, and told them about the highest excellence of the significance of the car-festival, which represented the return of Sree Krishna from Dwārakā to Vrindāvana after a long separation for a happy union with his beloved denizens of Vraja. Union after separation, intensifies the depth of love. Sree Chaitanya also told them about the highest personality of God being Krishna and the efficiency of the chanting of the Name of Sree Krishna. He further explained to them at this time the threefold classification of devotees according to their progress towards the realization of God. This

begins with submission to the guidance of the Spiritual Master and culminates in engaging oneself continuously without transgression in the service of God and His Eternal Associates.

One day, Vasudeva Datta, a beloved devotee of Sree Chaitanya, prayed for the redemption of all fallen souls of the world by taking upon himself all their sins, himself gladly undergoing eternal damnation for the sake of humanity at large. At this uncommon love for and kindness to the fallen, Sree Chaitanya embraced him warmly and assured him that his prayer would be granted by God with impunity on his part.

Sree Chaitanya then once more went to Bengal and visited several districts. At Ramakeli in Maldah he converted the two brothers Dabir Khās and Sākar Mallik—the Administration and Revenue Ministers respectively of Hossain Shah, the Governor of Bengal, and asked them to go to Vrindāvana and render service to Sree Krishna. These two brothers, though accepted the Muslim names and habits for all intent and purpose, were in fact Hindus and Brāhmins by caste. They were possessed of exceptional merits and were then the practical rulers of

Bengal. They were afterwards known as Rupa and Sanātana Goswāmīns respectively. Sree Chaitanya also met Raghunātha Dās at this time, and asked him to stay on at home and prepare himself for the final renunciation. Sree Chaitanya then returned to Puri to the great delight of his devotees there.

A few days later, Sree Chaitanya started for Vrindāvana, the scene of the transcendental pastimes of Sree Krishna and the most sacred place of pilgrimage for Hindus in India, through the jungle-route of Jhārikhanda in the Central Provinces, with one attendant. Throughout the journey through the dense forests, Sree Chaitanya incessantly chanted the Name of God and cried bitterly at his feeling of separation from the loving company of the Lord. This attracted the wild animals of the forests to him. When the beasts saw his beautiful figure and heard him chanting the Name of God, they forgot their animal nature and came near to him and began to lick his feet, expressing their love for him. Harmony and peace were established among the hostile animals and the tigers made friends with the deer instead of killing them.

In this way, Sree Chaitanya drew every soul he came in contact with to the fold of Divine Love, where animosity could find no place. Passing through Benares, he at last reached Muttra, the Birthplace of Sree Krishna, and circumambulated the twelve Groves deeply imbued with divine love for Krishna. Whosoever saw Sree Chaitanya in his mood of ecstasy began to be attracted to him and whoever came in touch with him surrendered wholly to the loving service of God, forgetting all the tribulations of their worldly life.

Sree Chaitanya then started his return journey. On his way to Allahabad, he converted the Pathan Prince, Bijali Khan, and his followers to Vaishnavism. It was here at Allahabad that Vallabhacharya met Sree Chaitanya and invited him to his house across the Yamuna and entertained him with great attention and reverence. Towards the end of his life this Vallabhacharya accepted ordination in the ecclesiastical order from a disciple of Sree Chaitanya and was afterwards known as the Founder of the Vallabha Sect, which mainly adopted the Vishnu-swami School of transcen-

dental non-distinctive monotheism, now prominent in the Bombay Presidency and Kathiwar. When Vallabha took Chaitanya in the boat in order to cross the Yamuna (Jumna) to reach his home, Sree Chaitanya fainted at the very sight of the Jumna which reminded him of the pastimes of Krishna on her banks. Vallabha, therefore, realising the danger, brought him back by the Ganges to the Dasaswamedh Ghat on the banks of the Ganges at Allahabad, where Sree Chaitanya met Sree Rupa Goswami, who, as Dabir Khān and Minister of Justice under Hossain Shah, was formerly converted by Chaitanya at Ramakeli in Bengal. Sree Chaitanya had a long talk with him on the sanctity of the transcendental Name, Form, Attributes and Realm of Krishna. After instructing him fully on the mellow-principles of Bhakti, Sree Chaitanya sent Rupa to Vrindavana.

When Sree Rupa, i.e. Dabir Khān, the Minister for Justice, left Bengal and submitted himself to the spiritual guidance of Sree Chaitanya, Hossain Shah the Muslim Governor took the hint and casted Sakar Malik, afterwards known as Sree Banatana Goswami, into

the prison-cell lest he would also renounce the world, and there would be none to run the Government. The Muslim Governor depended greatly on the administrative capacities of both the brothers. One had already left him, and the other was also in a mood to shake off all worldly connections. So placing Sakar Mallik under close guard, Hossain Shah went to the Orissa front to fight his enemies.

In the mean time Sree Rupa sent a letter from Allahabad to Sakar Mallik, i.e. Sanātana, his brother, reminding him of the worthlessness of this changeable world and that human birth would be not worth the name unless devoted to the service of God. He asked his brother to join Sree Chaitanya at Vrindābana. On receipt of the letter, Sanātana resolved to renounce. But what could he do? He was confined in a jail. He thought for a while and came to the conclusion that the service of God was more than anything in this world, and even if by violating a little some of the moral rules for the sake of attaining to the Feet of God, that would be real morality, for otherwise what would be the value of moral principles.

unless they be helpful to the realisation of God? Morality and immorality in this world are but relative. What is called moral in one instance is considered immoral in another instance. Anything that tends to the attainment of God is truly moral, and all considered acts that ultimately keep a man bound to the ties of worldliness are immoral in the absolute sense.

This principle, though high, is however dangerous for the greatest majority of the seekers of the Truth. If the Feet of the Lord is not truly reached, as it was possible in the case of Sanātana Goswāmi, the adoption of this principle will be ruinous if applied generally.

Thus thinking, Sanātana addressed the Muslim sentry: "Look here, friend, you are a great saint and well read in the Quran. I had helped you in various ways when I was the Revenue Minister. Now I am in your charge. You can now repay your gratitude by allowing me to run away from this prison. I shall also give you a large sum of money. Thereby a poor sentry like you will gain both spiritually and materially." The sentry replied: "I am touched by your kind words. But you know I

am but an insignificant man. If I should allow you to run away from this prison-house, the Governor will take my life." Sanātana assured him that there was no certainty of the Governor's return from the battle-field in Orissa, and even if he should return at all, the sentry could tell him that one day he had taken Sanātana to the Ganges for his religious ablutions when he fell into the stream and was washed away. At this the sentry argued : "But honestly speaking you are not going to die by plunging yourself in the Ganges. Should any one of the men of the Governor find you, then I shall definitely be hanged." To this Sanātana said : "You need not worry yourself for that; for I will not remain in this country at all, and shall go to Mecca as a Muslim mendicant."

At this the poor sentry who was tempted by the offer of a large sum of money, allowed Sanātana to go, who with one servant with him left the prison under cover of the darkness of the night and walked continuously till he crossed the boundary of the country on his way to Vrindaban to reach the Feet of his Lord. Sanātana and his servant at last reached the

foot of a hill, which they did not know how to cross. Nearby there was the house of a robber, and Sanātana approached him for his help. The robber came to know that Sanātana's servant was carrying some gold with him; and so with the intention of robbing them of their wealth, he treated them kindly. Sanātana suspected that his attendant must be carrying some money, for otherwise why should the robber be so particular to treat them kindly. Accordingly an enquiry he came to know that his servant had brought some money with him. At this Sanātana was annoyed, and asked him to give up the money to the robber and go back home; for, one who has still affinity for material wealth will not be fit to leave home in search of God. Thus left alone, Sanātana walked all the way and reached Benares at last. Here he came to know that Śree Chaitanya had already returned to Benares from Allahabad on his way back to Puri. So he was overjoyed to meet his Lord earlier.

In this way Sanātana, the Revenue Minister of Bengal, who was cast into the prison because of his wish to resign his post in order to join

Sree Chaitanya, hastened as quickly as possible to Benares to meet his spiritual sponsor. On his way, he had to encounter a series of obstacles which endangered his life, but by the grace of God, he overcame them all and ultimately reached Benares. Sree Chaitanya received him in his warm embrace; and then explained to Sanātana the inner truths of the Vaishnaba philosophy. After divulging the whole of the Vaishnaba Philosophy to him, Sree Chaitanya sent Sanātana to Vrindāvana with delegated power for greater works. The discourse of Sree Chaitanya to Sanātana on his philosophical teachings will be dealt with separately under the heading of 'Philosophy of Sree Chaitanya.'

The justification of Sanātana's flattering the illiterate sentry, bribing him with money and telling him apparent lies—thus violating moral laws, was in the fact that by so doing he was at last able to reach the object of his spiritual search by coming in contact with Sree Chaitanya. The end justified the means; otherwise this flagrant violation of moral rules would have brought disaster to his life.

While Sree Chaitanya was staying with Chandrasekhara at Benares, King Subuddhi Roy had been forced to drink water from the hands of a Muslim, for which the Brāhmins had excommunicated him, and prescribed death as his penance! Roy approached Sree Chaitanya for advice, and was instructed to chant the Holy Name of God as the only means of expiation for his sins and offences—if he had committed any sin or offence in his life. Nobody could dare say a word against Sree Chaitanya who was accepted by all as one who had known the Scriptures better than anybody else.

During his stay at Benares, Sree Chaitanya met Sree Prakāśānanda Saraswati—the most formidable exponent of the pantheistic doctrine—who was at the head of ten thousand scholarly disciples and monks. This was the third great discussion Sree Chaitanya had with non-devotional schools. The great academic leader of ten thousand monks of Benares, who was wonderfully versed in the Vedas and the Vedānta, submitted completely with all his monk-disciples to Sree Chaitanya who then explained to him that the fundamental principles of a spiritual

life and the underlying meaning of the Vedas could never be fully understood by any human being, however great a scholar he might be, as transcendental knowledge could never be adequately acquired by the limited empiric powers gained from manifested phenomena by the exercise of the defective physical and mental senses. Self-effulgent Reality can be realised by unconditional surrender to the divine grace of God and His devotees. Sree Chaitanya asked Sree Prakāśānanda to chant the Name of Krishna, which when he began, so imbued him with Divine Love and wisdom that he realised the Name of God to be identical with His Person, His Attributes, Entourage and Pastimes. The famous scholar realised that the Scriptures were free from the four-fold defects of error, inadvertence, inadequacy of the human senses, and deception.

This victory of Sree Chaitanya over the Benares-school of Philosophy established finally his unchallengeable supremacy all over India as well as the superiority of the Naimissaranya-school of Philosophy. He had defeated and converted Kesava Bhatta of the North when

he was only sixteen; later on, Visuddha Sarabhabhuma in the South; he now contacted Prakāśananda of Western India; and in the East, he himself was the recognised Master. Sree Chaitanya thus established his mission all over India and returned to Puri. This Prakāśananda Saraswati of Benares, who was a Sankarite Sannyāsin, must not be confounded with Prabodhānanda Saraswati, whom Sree Chaitanya met at Trichonapoly, and was a Tridandi Vaishnaba Sannyāsin.

Of the forty-eight years of his life in this world, Sree Chaitanya spent the first twenty-four in Bengal as a house-holder. The following six years, after his renunciation at the early age of twenty-four, were spent in travelling, preaching, spreading and establishing his mission of the Doctrine of Divine Love and Chanting of the Name of Sree Krishna all over India. To the people of the world he would hardly mention about the various aspects of love of God, but asked them to chant the Name of Krishna, by which alone their hearts would be purified; in a pure heart alone the Lord appears. The next six years he lived at

Puri in the blissful company of his intimate associates and disciples teaching them the esoteric realisation of the Realm of Divine Love. And the concluding twelve years he devoted exclusively to the tasting of the sweetness of the fruit of Krishna-Prema which culminates in the closer unity-in-separation in love.

When Sree Chaitanya took his seat at "Gambhira", Rupa Goswami came from Vrindavana to meet him. Desired by Chaitanya to write on the conception of Bhakti and *Prema* on which he had instructed him at Allahabad, Sree Rupa wrote two volumes, known as *Lalita-Madhava* and *Vidagdha-Madhava*, and brought them with him for the approval of Chaitanya. Chaitanya was immensely pleased with his works, which are two of the best volumes in the Gaudiya Vaishnava literature. It was on the occasion of this second meeting of Sree Rupa with Sree Chaitanya that the former wrote a Sanskrit Sloka, interpreting the inner feeling of Chaitanya regarding his longing for Krishna. Krishna left Radha and the Gopis of Vrindavana and went to Muttra and afterwards became the King of Dwarka. The

Divine Lovers were suffering from the pangs of separation. Years rolled by, and it was on the occasion of a solar eclipse that Sree Krishna, the King of Dwārakā, came to Kurukshetra with pomp and grandeur followed by a large retinue and Himself on the back of a richly dressed elephant; Rādhā and the Gopis of Vrindāvana came to know that Sree Krishna was coming to Kurukshetra, and so they also assembled there. They met; Krishna no more the cowherd, but King; while Rādhā and her handmaids the same simple folk of the village. When the Gopis approached Krishna, He said; "You are same Rādhā and I am same Krishna, and we meet; but I am not happy here; my heart longs to go back to the banks of the Yamunā and meet you all there in the midst of our former unsophisticated life." When Sree Chaitanya read the purport of the sloka, written by Rupa Goswāmi, he was overwhelmed with the remembrance of Krishna.

At this stage Sree Rupa had further talks with Rāi Rāmananda on the highest conception of Love. Chaitanya's longing for Krishna was daily increasing, and he was hardly able

to maintain his normal disposition. He therefore began to avoid outsiders, and would spend most of his time in the company of Swarupa Dāmodara, Rāi Rāmananda and a few others delineating the love of Rādhā for Krishna. Though Sree Chaitanya was thus deeply engaged in his thought on Krishna, he was not unmindful of the conduct and progress of his disciples.

There was one Haridās (junior), and not Thākura Haridās, who used to sing prayers before Chaitanya. He was also entrusted to beg rice for Chaitanya, as is the custom of Hindu monks. Junior Haridās was himself a renouncer. One day it so happened that Sree Chaitanya came to know about Haridās' begging rice from a widow. He further came to know that Haridās was approaching that widow with evil motives at heart. This Sree Chaitanya could not tolerate, and asked Haridās to leave his presence at once. Haridās cried and begged his pardon; the other disciples and devotees also appealed to Sree Chaitanya to excuse junior Haridās for his first folly. But Chaitanya would listen to none, and forbade Haridās to approach him any more. The punishment was so hard for

Haridās that he at last decided himself by plunging into the waters at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna at Allahabad. When the news reached Sree Chaitanya, he said that that was the proper punishment for a monk who lived a secret life with an immoral purpose. This was a warning to all the disciples of Sree Chaitanya that he would never tolerate immoral conduct of any.

Thakur Haridās was one of the most beloved and respected disciples of Sree Chaitanya. He was the accredited teacher of the chanting of the Name of God. His was an ideal life of absolute renunciation and complete submission to the mercy of God. Jagadānanda was another devotee of Sree Chaitanya whose love and devotion was immeasurable. Once Jagadānanda brought some oil from Bengal for Sree Chaitanya and wanted him to make use of it. Chaitanya replied : "How can I use your oil, though so affectionately brought for me ? It does not befit a monk." At this the tender feelings of Jagadānanda were wounded and he threw the oil-pot on the earth, breaking it to pieces, and closed himself in a room in his sensitive love

and would not eat anything. Sree Chaitanya told him many tender words and promised to take food cooked by him, or as otherwise he also would not take his meals. A sensitive pride born of intense love was deep in Jagadānanda, and he gave way to Sree Chaitanya's endearment.

The last twelve years of Sree Chaitanya marked the overwhelming anguish of separation from his Divine Beloved. This last stage of the life of Sree Chaitanya can hardly be understood by the worldly minded in their proper perspective. Sree Chaitanya was day and night in a state of intense agony and longing for Krishna. Horripilation, tears, tremor, perspiration, laughter, etc. were constantly noticed in his body. Sometimes he would be rolling on the ground and bruising his face by rubbing it against the rocky floor; sometimes his hands and legs would be disjoined, and at other time they would be entering inside his body. All sorts of impossible things were noticed in his life during this period. One day he ran to the sea and jumped into it, mistaking it to be the Yamunā and was drowned and carried by the current fourteen miles away from Puri to

Konāraka. On another occasion he plunged into the sea and was only caught in the net of fishermen and came to his senses when his followers began to chant aloud the Name of Krishna. He would run to the trees and embrace them, or ask the creepers if they had seen Krishna going that way.

In fact the last days of Sree Chaitanya were so uncommon that one would often misunderstand him unless one would approach him from *his* stand-point of utmost love for God.

The disappearance of Sree Chaitanya from this world was rather strange. One day he called for his most beloved associates and started with them for the Temple of Gopināthji at Puri. He alone entered the Temple and closed the doors, his associates waiting outside in expectation of his return after worshipping the Deities. But he did not come out again—the door was broken open and they found that Chaitanya had withdrawn himself from the world.

In the above brief account of the career of Sree Krishna-Chaitanya it has not been possible to go into details, or even to mention all the

leading facts, lest they should appear to the reader (mostly to an European reader) to be very dissimilar to his own way of thinking. Those events consist chiefly of his dealings with his associates, which form practically the whole of his career. They also constitute the positive illustration of his teaching. The events that relate to his dealings with non-devotees are of secondary and negative value. To the ordinary reader, however, the secondary group might appear to be much more attractive and instructive than the main events. The transcendental writers of his biography accordingly warn us against the error of undervaluing the connection of Sree Chaitanya with his associates. They assure us that unless one is prepared to take this view of the personality and doings of his associates, one is sure to miss the real significance of his career.

The associates of Sree Chaitanya were not a body of blind followers although they certainly never asserted their independence from him in the minutest detail of their conduct. Their complete subservience does not lessen the distinctive character of the personality of any

one of them. They do not merge into the sun, so to say, but are subsidiary to the glory that radiates from the great luminary.

Nityānanda or Nityai was the foremost associate of Sree Chaitanya. It is, therefore, necessary to be acquainted with the career of Nityānanda as a representative of the activities of Sree Chaitanya's associates. If any one pursues the narrative of the career of Sree Chaitanya from the stand-point of Nityānanda, he is assured, by the associates of Sree Chaitanya, of a restoration to the state of grace.

Nityānanda was devoted to the service of God from infancy. He was allowed by his parents to renounce the world at the age of twelve, at the request of a wandering monk. He was born about fourteen years before Chaitanya. After leaving his parents, Nityānanda wandered all over India visiting all the holy places of the country. He spent twenty years on pilgrimage in this manner. He then took up his residence at Vrindāvana where he lived in perfect simplicity in the woodlands dedicated to the pastimes of Sree Krishna. When he heard of the advent of Nityai Puṇḍit, he went down to Nabadwip.

and joined him. He at once became his principal associate in all his activities. When subsequently Sree Chaitanya went to live at Puri, he deputed Nityānanda to Bengal to bestow loving devotion on the people of that part of the world without distinction of caste, creed or fitness.

Every one of the associates of Sree Chaitanya had his individual mode of service. Nityānanda was distinguished by his open contempt for conventional practices and for his violent denunciation of avowed atheists, while Advaita Achārya was of the orthodox type. Nityai selected the dregs of society as the recipients of his mercy. His ultra-democratic method demanding unreserved acceptance of the conditions of spiritual living met with strong opposition by the upper classes, full of vanity over their superior earthly merits and possessions. Some writers have represented his method not being in strict conformity with the more sober teaching and practice of Sree Chaitanya. Such a view is altogether erroneous. The teaching of Sree Chaitanya is, however, most aptly illustrated by Nityānanda.

It is for this reason that all the associates of Sree Chaitanya insist that any one who misunderstands the association between him and Nityānanda can get no adequate idea of the significance of his teaching.

There is another point which may be conveniently mentioned here. After having passed the greater part of his life as a super-ascetic, Nityānanda married and lived in great affluence and luxury, during the period of his deputation in Bengal. His conduct in this connection is unique among the associates of Sree Chaitanya. Those who ape the conduct of Nityānanda in the name of religion do mischief to the society. It is only the very highest order of devotee who does not need to adhere strictly to the service prescribed by the scriptural regulations. But if a person rejects all discipline before attainment of the status of a *real Paramahansa* on the pretext that individual freedom is to be valued above all other considerations, he thereby misses his only chance of redemption which would be his a strict observance of scriptural regulation under the guidance of self-realised Guru. The apparently

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unorthodox conduct of Nityananda, the highest devotee, is in perfect conformity with the spirit of all salutary laws prescribed by the Scriptures for enforcing discipline among persons in a stage of pupilage. Nityananda forcibly imposed the utmost rigours of discipline on the most degraded people of this world, while he himself followed an exactly opposite course. Unfortunately there are now many in the country, particularly in the Chaitanya Sect, who lavishly imitate Nityananda and thereby deceive themselves and those who thoughtlessly submit to them.

CHAPTER III

PERSONALITY OF SREE CHAITANYA

The career of Sree Chaitanya may be identified with his teachings, in conformity with his own dictum that no one can be a preacher of religion who does not act up to his own teaching. His career is a constant search for God in the overwhelming *anguish of separation* from his Divine Beloved. This is the basic note and it becomes explicit from the time of his initiation into spiritual life in his eighteenth year. It reaches its climax in the twelve concluding years of his career. His career is considered by his followers to be identical with Sree Krishna. The doctrine to which this consideration leads is that God alone confers His Own distinctive service in the process of serving Himself. This also constitutes the personality of the All-pervasive God—Vishnu—in concrete form. In other words, the activities of Sree Chaitanya are realized as belonging to

the plane of positive transcendence. His career cannot be correctly described, nor fully understood, by those who have not transcended the physical and mental planes by submitting to a regular course of spiritual training under the expert guidance of a *true* Guru. As the real significance of his career becomes apparent to the enlightened soul, it is necessary and important to make a scientific study of the accounts of his career penned by his inspired followers.

The personality and career of all prophets, are regarded by their followers as the concrete criterion of their respective teachings. This imparts to their teachings a quality of living interest by bringing them within the scope of historical treatment. In the case of the career of Sree Chaitanya this interest is fully retained in its original essence by the literary labours of a group of enlightened writers who strictly adhere to their realisation of the transcendental, and help their readers to check any tendency towards a wrong historical judgment.

The teachings of Sree Chaitanya should, therefore, be approached from the point of view

of his personality and career. By following this method the reader will avoid the supposition that Sree Chaitanya's teachings refer to the experience of an unspiritual life as led by the people of this world. This is the only way to understand the spiritual meaning of his career and teaching.

It is not possible to have any conscious dealings with God on our own terms. There is a body of opinion that it is not, therefore, necessary to seek for such communion, that the Quest of God is useless. The absence of harmony in this world is thus accepted as an immutable fact by those who are opposed on principle to the Personality and Initiative of God. It is also feared that this world would cease to function if its discords were completely eliminated. The non-absolutist is a mundane positivist. The modern scientific mind is practically in sympathy with him.

But it is not practicable to shut our eyes to the existence of evils in this world and to refrain from all attempt to cure them effectively. This ethical need is not satisfied with the *status quo*. The ethical instinct is insatiable of perpetual

activity in the higher sense. And ethics in its turn leads to the quest of the Absolute. Unless a person is deeply ethical he has no need to think comprehensively about the problem of evil. He can also never be fully interested in the establishment of a state of real harmony.

It is possible to seek for harmony without being a dreamer or idealist. Plato and Aristotle do not exhaust between them the resources of human endeavour. The Scriptures of India present us with a definite conception of the personality of God with an eternal active initiative in the affairs of men. The Greek idea did not rise to the necessity of this conception. Neither Plato nor Aristotle ever suspected the possibility of a method of quest that is neither positive in the worldly sense, nor idealistic. If the Absolute is always taking the initiative, it becomes necessary to take cognisance of this basic fact of our existence.

The path of the *Sruties* (the path of listening to) of the Indo-Aryan theology has not yet been adequately considered by the scientific thinkers of the West. It is so different from all current methods that it is liable to be regarded

as almost puerile unless one is prepared to undergo a complete reversal of one's accustomed mode of thinking on the subject of the Absolute. It is often heard even of cultured persons that they talk slightly of the doctrine of the Descent of transcendence, by relying on the wrong views of the worldly scholars. It is, therefore, necessary to take the subject out of the hands of persons who are by temperament and training prejudiced against its very necessity.

The Absolute is self-contained. He does not stand in need of any help from His exponents even for His descent to the mundane plane. The whole credit of the process belongs entirely to the Absolute. His so-called exponents receive from Him their power of becoming the medium of communication. This is the root of the process. All literary exponents of the Scriptures of India, especially in these days, do not always possess the humility of spirit that is necessary to accept mediums of Divine Communication.

The personality of Sree Chaitanya reveals to us the Medium as identical with the Word. God is ultimately His Own Medium of Appearance.

The Sanskrit language is a product of the deluding potency of God in the same way as any other language of the world. The Word is not any language of this world. In this sense the Sanskritists are not in a better position than those who are entirely ignorant of that language, for understanding the subject-matter of the Scriptures of India. The misinformed Sanskritist is in a worse position in this respect than the others, because he may be more disposed to rely on the resources of mundane scholarship for arriving at the Truth. But this is not the path of the Sruties or the Upanishads, which lies in preceptorial order.

The only path is that of listening to the discourses about God, that have been recorded in the scriptural literature. It is, however, also forbidden by the Scriptures of the Hindus to listen to those discourses from the lips of any person who is not a *sādhu*. We are enjoined to listen to the words of a *sādhu* by the method of unconditional submission to the Word of a *sādhu* as well as to the medium of His descent. The medium is not less divine than the Word. But this part of the doctrine was never before

given to the world in its elaborate form, as we have it now. The personality of Sree Chaitanya has revealed the Divinity of the function of the Medium.

The complaint is sometimes heard from otherwise well-informed quarters that Sree Chaitanya has not left to us any detailed exposition of his doctrine. Written by himself as has been done by almost all the famous Teachers of the eternal function of the soul. There is a very good reason why Sree Chaitanya did not write any book. He put all stress on the personality of the *sadhū* or the medium. The *sadhū* is the only reality accessible to the people of this world. The Hindu Scriptures themselves possess at best a derivative spiritual value. Without the help of *sadhū* the Scriptures are sure to mislead their readers. It was for the purpose of establishing this superiority of the *sadhū* to the Scriptures that Sree Chaitanya, although he was reputed to be the greatest scholar of his time, did not place any great emphasis on the study of the Scriptures as the method to be followed in the quest of God. The method that he promulgated is known as "*Saṅkīrtana*".

which means literally 'singing the Word or Name of Krishna in the company of sādhus.'

The form of worship of God that is available to the people of this world is that of "Samkirtana." God is to be served in the form of the Word. The Word manifests its appearance on the lips of the sādhu. The Word manifests its descent in the form of mundane language into the fleshly ear of persons whose soul's ear is shut against it. The perforation of the fleshly ear has to be effected before a person is in a position to listen with his soul's ear to the transcendental Name as God is. This perforation is effected also by the power of the Word appearing on the lips of the sādhu. The method of Samkirtana, therefore, reveals the function of the sādhu in its least ambiguous and only accessible form.

The Scriptures have not escaped their exploitation by non-sādhus for non-spiritual purposes. They are intended to be studied by those who are afflicted with the mistaken hankering for mundane scholarship. In order to cure this evil propensity the study of the Scriptures at the feet of the sādhu was prescribed as a punitive

but remedial activity. It is not necessary for any person to study the Shāstras separately in the manner analogous to that of the students of this world, for attaining a knowledge of the Truth. The chanting of the Word is accompanied by the automatic manifestation of the perfect knowledge of God that is declared in a symbolic form by the Scriptures.

Sree Chaitanya acted the part of the greatest of sādhus, viz. the part of Sree Rādhā. The greatness of the Spiritual Masters is not the greatness of mundane authors. The Spiritual Masters have no literary or other forms of wordly ambition. It is not empty words that have been written by the followers of Sree Chaitanya when they apologise for recording the activities of Sree Chaitanya, lest those records might be misunderstood. They wrote by the express Command of God. They accordingly always write only in praise of the Word.

According to Sree Chaitanya, that Word, as Object of worship, is Sree Krishna. The records of the Scriptures in their living form are the Body of the Divinity. They are simultaneously the Object of worship as well as the worshipper

or teacher of worship. As teacher of worship the Word is nearer to humanity. The scriptural records are only a part of the Whole. Sree Chaitanya is not merely the living form of the records of the Scriptures, but he also exceeds all records. It is very difficult for the literary pedant to open his heart fully to receive the Whole Truth in preference to his mistaken views imbibed by the study of the Scriptural literature in the light of cramped, perverted understanding.

The Scriptural records enshrine the *Archā* or symbolic Image of the Word as spoken Sound. The Sound is the Absolute Entity. The record is the symbol of the transcendental Sound. The symbol is not intelligible except as the Image of the Sound. Listening to and chanting of the Name are direct service of God. The service is not available except by the causeless grace of the pure devotee on whose lips alone the Word manifests its appearance. The spiritual nature of this process is also entirely hidden from the understanding of persons who are not blessed by the mercy of the sādhu. The transcendental epistemological circle is completed by the personality of the sādhu.

The Scriptures have to be studied at the feet of the sādhu. They can be studied only by those who are permitted to study them. This raises the interesting point as to the relationship of our dedicated mundane activities to the substantive spiritual service that is performed by the soul in the unconditioned state.

The study of the Scriptures may be practised as dedicated activity, or for the satisfaction of our mental and physical needs. The result obtained by the former method will be spiritual. The later method will lead to wrong views about spiritual entities treated in the Scriptures. It is very difficult to get rid of one's wrong impressions when they have once been formed by a study of the Scriptures in the ordinary way.

It is very difficult for a person who is, mundanely speaking, well versed in the scriptural literature to admit even to himself his complete ignorance of the subject-matter treated in the Scriptures. But unless a person is willing to learn everything from the lips of the sādhu, he is not eligible by the scriptural tests, for spiritual enlightenment. Even when this principle is intellectually admitted by a scriptural

scholar he cannot in practice avoid being prejudiced in favour of his previously formed literary conclusions. He has to go through the process of unlearning for the attainment of that perfect openness of submissive judgment that is the pre-requisite of spiritual pupilage. The pupilage can only begin thereafter.

The conclusions reached by a person who studies the Scriptures by the method of complete submission at the feet of the spiritual teachers point to '*samandha-jñāna*' or knowledge of one's relationship with God. The actual realisation of this relationship is accompanied by the true knowledge of such relationship. As a matter of fact there is no such difference, as between cause and effect, between the knowledge of relationship and the practice of the same. In proportion as such relationship is actually practised the knowledge is perfected. Such is the nature of the positive spiritual function which is indivisible.

The study of the Scriptures cannot lead to the realisation of one's spiritual relationship with God. There is no reason why it should do so. But if this relationship is not realised, nothing has been really gained by such study.

If the Scriptures are studied under instructions of the Spiritual Preceptor, such study becomes thereby the practice of service by the devotee to God. As the devotee is a perfect medium, the study permitted by him is permitted by God. It is for this reason that the result of such study tends to spiritual enlightenment as its concomitant included aspect.

When Sree Krishna manifested His Birth in the prison of King Kamsa in His Four-armed Form, Sree Devaki, His Mother, confessed to the Divine Baby that all people of this world would scoff at the idea that the Absolute Sree Krishna has been born as her son ; and she, therefore, prayed that He should not disclose His Divine Form to any other person for her sake. The Scriptures forbid us to divulge our individual spiritual experience to those who are sure to receive such communication with suspicion. The Scriptures, i.e. the Vedas, the Brāhmanas, the Upanishads, the Purānas, etc. do not teach us to conceal the Truth but to preach Him, with due consideration for the status of the congregation. Those who are vain enough to imagine that they can measure the greatness of Sree

Chaitanya by comparing him with the famous Achāryas or Teachers who have recorded their teachings in their priceless works for the good of humanity are likely to be disappointed on making the discovery that he wrote no books of any description. But his career was the subject-matter of a large body of records that were penned in his time and subsequently by a group of his devotees.

Sree Rupa and Sanātana Goswāmins, who were living in Vrindābana, indeed, wrote almost exclusively about Sree Krishna. They were employed to record the teaching of the Supreme Lord. Sree Chaitanya taught the people of this world how Sree Krishna is served by Sree Radhā, His Divine Counter-part or Consort. The Vrindābana-Goswāmins have accordingly treated of the personality of Sree Krishna. They devoted themselves to treat the Divine Personality of Sree Krishna as the Object of relationship, as practice of relationship and as love. They described the personality of Sree Radhā in greater detail than even that of Sree Krishna. The Goswāmins were associated counterparts of Sree Chaitanya, through whom

he manifested his teaching of the service of Sree Krishna, in the form of literary compositions.

Another group of his associates put into writing his own personality. These records are no less important than the books written by the Goswamins about Sree Krishna. The personality of Sree Chaitanya can alone give us the real clue to that of Sree Krishna. The personality of Chaitanya is identical with his teaching, and his teaching reveals the personality of Sree Krishna. But it is nevertheless possible for even conditioned souls to understand the personality of Sree Chaitanya. It is never possible for any conditioned soul not to misunderstand the personality of Sree Chaitanya. Therefore, the subject-matter of the second group of writers is alone really accessible to the conditioned souls of this world.

But the personality of Sree Chaitanya has also been unnecessarily misunderstood and misrepresented by both professed and misguided opponents of his teaching. It is impossible for any person really to misunderstand the career of Sree Chaitanya as narrated by his associates and genuine followers. But although it is not

possible to misunderstand the account of Sree Chaitanya's activities preserved in the genuine records, it is nevertheless very rarely, indeed, that any person is truly inclined to follow the life of devotion that is exemplified by the careers of Sree Chaitanya and his associates.

This serving inclination can also be produced only by listening to the narrative of his career from the lips of pure devotees by the method of submission. The career of Sree Chaitanya has been comprehensibly described in two complementary works viz. *Sree Chaitanya-Bhāgavata* by Thākura Vrindābanadāsa and *Sree Chaitanya-Charitāmrita* by Sreela Krishnadāsa Kavirāja Goswāmi.

So far attempts have been made in these books to show that Sree Chaitanya should not be classed with the intellectual heroes of this world. Intellectualism represents a department of the perverse activity of the soul in the conditioned state. The career of Sree Chaitanya provides the only remedy for this delusion of intellectualism.

But Sree Chaitanya was also not subject to emotionalism. He displayed the acme of the

true aesthetic activity. But those activities have no relation to objects or experiences of this world which are the source of the aesthetic inspiration of poets and artists of this world. It is for this reason that the ordinary artistic temperament fails utterly to appreciate the truly aesthetic performances of the Supreme Lord. That which ministers to the gratification of the Senses of Krishna lies beyond the scope of the sensuous range of conditioned souls. The transcendental aesthetics of the conduct of Sree Chaitanya is the cure for the malady of mundane emotionalism of every description.

Mundane intellectualism and mundane emotionalism are, however, perversions of the corresponding spiritual aptitudes. Mere abstention from intellectualism and emotionalism does not cure one of these weaknesses by annihilating the corresponding spiritual aptitudes. Yet this suicidal goal is the ideal of deluded asceticism. Neither the epicure nor the stoic nor any admixture of the two can satisfy the yearning of pure souls. Pleasure and pain, knowledge and ignorance of this world are alike useless for the purposes of the soul. These experiences belong

to the mundane plane which is foreign to the essence of the soul.

We have been put in our present unnatural position by our utter forgetfulness of the personality of God. In the attempt to get back to our normal state we sometimes profess to follow the teaching of the Scriptures. But our want of knowledge of the nature of the personality of God makes it impossible for us to understand the spiritual contents of the Scriptures. We nevertheless often choose to suppose that we really understand the message. It is only the sādhu who is in a position to disabuse us of our so-called religious views by enabling us to approach the Divine Personality as He is.

But we are also liable to misunderstand the personality of the sādhu even when we are afforded the opportunity of actually listening to his words. Unless, however, it is possible for us to understand the attitude that must be adopted by us for learning the Truth from the lips of the sādhu we can have no other way of regaining our unalloyed spiritual state. We cannot present the right attitude towards the

genuine spiritual teacher until we have a true knowledge of his spiritual personality. The career of Sree Chaitanya can help us to understand the spiritual personality of the pure devotee. The narratives of his career, indeed, concentrate on this vital issue.

It is really a question of being enabled to know ourselves. Our souls are not physical or mental entities. But we have at present apparently no available means of understanding what we really are. The nature of the soul passes all human understanding. It is not possible to understand the spiritual nature of the soul except as the personality of the sādhu. The personality of Sree Chaitanya is the divine archetype of the personality of the devotee of God in his fullest and unambiguous manifestation.

The personality of Sree Chaitanya thus supplies ultimate clue to the meaning of the Scriptures which teach us to realise the eternal function of our souls by serving the sādhus. The service of the sādhus is not practicable if we wilfully ignore or misunderstand the personality of the sādhu. All misunderstandings on the subject could fully be removed if we

could realise that to serve the sādhu is identical with serving the Absolute. The identity of the Absolute Personality with that of His servitors is represented by the Personality of Sree Chaitanya. In describing the personality of Chaitanya the sādhu is really employed in supplying us with an account of the spiritual personality of ourselves at the source. As a matter of fact the principle of personality is the one abiding verity in every position. Everything else is futile.

It is necessary to grasp this fact in some detail. The personality of God is not devoid of the relative reference to Himself. This is the principle of duality in the One Indivisible Person. The reciprocity inside the single personality is, however, the exclusive nature of the Absolute. The reciprocal side of His personality is both Medium as well as the Reciprocals of His Manifestation to Himself. Sree Chaitanya, the Reciprocal side, does not appear in the individualistic position. The reciprocal side in his case is the whole entity turned inside out, if one may use such an expression in regard to the Integer.

"The reciprocal divine personality also eternally appears as an individual alongside the Integer. This does not make the Integer lose his reciprocal side. The Manifestation, to his reciprocals through his reciprocals is simultaneously an identity and a projection of the divine personality."

"This is nothing trivial except the absence of the conscious realisation of our reciprocal relationship to the Absolute Integer. Every detail of the Absolute in His Manifestation of the principle of incorporated but real reciprocity to Himself must, therefore, be the only Means of self-revelation of all individual reciprocals, through this reference of Identity with the Absolute."

The personality of Sree Chaitanya is the source of all entitative individual existence. His name, form, qualities, activities and entourage are pervertedly reflected to our deluded understanding in the forms of the entities of this world as perceived by us through our senses. The question of triviality is relevant only if it is applied to the whole of this mundane experience. The querrel between the learned

and the ignorant, the trivial and the valuable of this world are the hollow, unintelligible shadows of the perfect activities of God in the subjective reciprocation with Himself, and objectively in reciprocation with the infinity of his real individual reciprocals in the Realm of God.

The spoken transcendental Sound is the divine medium of communication between conditioned and unconditioned souls. In the form of the Word, God communicates Himself most unambiguously to the individual soul. God is, of course, free to appear as Name, Form, Quality, Activity or Servitor. But the Name is the declared mode of His appearance in this world. It does not follow that it is the only truly accessible mode to persons of all conditions. Accordingly the Form, Quality and Entourage of God, even when They make their appearance in this world, can also be properly approached only through the Word, and in the Word.

If we cannot approach the personality of God through His Name, by what other method is it feasible for us to realise Him? The gross body can, indeed, be approached by the senses of sight

and touch. But the personality of God has no physical body. The mind of a person can be approached neither by the mind nor by the physical senses. The physical ear cannot approach the Name of Krishna.

The Name of Krishna is a Spiritual Entity. It is identical with the personality of Krishna. The impersonal conception of personality makes a distinction between the mind and the body of a person and the principle that underlies the activities of both without sharing their entities ; but the defect of such a conception consists in its intangibility. If the mind and the body are taken away from a person, it is not possible for us to understand in any definite manner what is left of that person. It is, of course, possible and easy to change the name of a person in this world without interfering with him in any way. The Name is thus an unconnected part of a person in this world. Why then should we suppose that the Name is identical with the person on the spiritual plane ?

This is no doubt the reason of our great unwillingness to accept a doctrine that is wholly opposed to our ordinary experience. If we were

allowed to act in accordance with our experience we would certainly prefer to approach the divine mentally in an abstract way. The method of the higher Mathematics would be considered as most suitable for such a purpose. By symbolisation and generalisation we succeed in getting rid of the obstacles of name, form, quality, activity and environment of any thing of this world that we wish to examine thoroughly. It is not possible for us to try to get at the truth of a thing of this world only by concentrating on its isolated aspects. If the thing in itself is neither name, form, etc. it becomes necessary to isolate it from these accidentals in order to examine the substratum by the method of concentration.

In the Yoga system of Patanjali we accordingly find that the student who is willing to realise the nature of the underlying substance is required to cultivate the exclusive state (samādhi) in which the mind is rendered perfectly inactive, the assumption being that if the soul or substance is not interfered with by the accidentals, he can find his own nature automatically.

But as a matter of fact it is not possible to put aside our mental activity in such an artificial manner. It can only apparently be made to cease. But it continues to operate all the while with increasing vigour on the sub-conscious plane. The exclusiveness that is thus produced resembles the state of intoxication, and the experiences gained during such state of enforced exclusiveness are of the nature of hallucinations that are produced by intoxication.

The soul has to be approached by the resources of the soul. The starting-point in the process is the awakening of the soul against the obstructive activities of the body and mind. This is possible with the help of a really awakened soul. The initiative must lie with the awakened soul if the experiment is to be successful. The difficulty is that it may not be possible for the dormant soul to recognise or accept the help of the awakened soul on the spiritual plane. But this difficulty also can be removed by the causeless active help of the awakened soul becoming available to the dormant soul.

But if the substratum or the soul is really uncontaminated with the physical and mental

ingredients, how is it possible to approach him positively with one's body and mind while one's soul continues to be dormant? The activity of the body and mind coincides with the dormant state of the soul. The inhibition of mental activity, that is sought to be effected by physical and mental methods, is itself a negative form of physical and mental activity. It can, therefore, never lead to the natural awakening of the soul in and through such activities. The soul can be awakened only by some positive activity of itself, or even of another soul towards him.

The accidents of body and mind, and the accident of these accidents in the form of the name, must also have their counterparts in the eternal substance or the reality. This is so because there can be nothing outside Reality. The body and mind are not wholly unconnected with the substratum, as is assumed by the impersonalist view. Neither can we accept any practical guidance from the thorough-going negative thinker in our endeavour to discover the positive spiritual method. We should not, therefore, attach more importance to the negative guesses of impersonalists regarding the actual

nature of the soul, than to the statements of persons who possess positive knowledge of the Reality.

Our knowledge of this phenomenal world is accumulated and extended with the help of language. The kindergarten-system, that follows the method of propagating knowledge with the help of all the senses, does not aim at abolishing the traditional method of learning from books. The linguistic method takes the help of articulated sound as well as visual representation of the form of sound by means of the written line. But sound is not dependent on line which forms only subordinate illustrative and conservative functions. The living factor in the process is language. It is, therefore, no reversal of the traditional method to have recourse to the medium of language in our endeavour to realise transcendence.

The words of the sādhu communicate to us in symbolic form his realised experience of transcendence. It is the best of all available methods for such communication. The process in this case is not wholly negative. The words of the sādhu even in their negative aspect must

always point to the positive, although to us inconceivable entities. For this reason they cannot be wholly untrue.

The sādhu speaks about the name, form, qualities, activities and realm of God. It is not possible for us to understand their meaning in the positive sense until we have been equipped with the requisite spiritual faculties. For such resuscitation of our dormant spiritual faculties also we cannot rely on any better method than listening to his words.

In this world language is used in the way that leads to untruth. The proper names of the entities in this world do not convey any real meaning. The general is not contained in the particular. But if we merely continue to move away from the particular, how can we also hope to come back to it with increased knowledge? The relation of unity to plurality is not such that residual individual aspect should be counted as of less importance. Such a view destroys all possibility of bringing the general under the particular. Yet this must be the ultimate object of all converging generalisations.

The use of language by the sādhu is accordingly different both in its method and purpose, from that of the people of this world. The sādhu starts with the proper name and seeks to derive other particulars from this particular. He does not try to take a partial view of his function to the letters and words of his language. He does not look upon sound as a dead instrument. This is the initial blunder of the linguists of the world. Their neglect of particulars is exemplified by their neglect of sound which is to give them their knowledge of the world and all other knowledge, in this fullest measure.

All the revealed Scriptures propose that the word is both instrument for communication and acquisition of the knowledge of things, as well as the entity of the things themselves, the knowledge of which is thus communicated and realised. Why should it be considered so impossible to believe this doctrine? Why do we assume that the word and the entity signified by the word must be unconnected by any substantive bond? Transcendental epistemology, as we find in the Scriptures of the Hindus, makes a distinction

of Sound. It tells us to approach things by submitting to the initiative of the enlightening potency of living Sound. The eclipsing function leads to the experience of dead material existence.

The Name of God should be allowed to draw the visual Form of God. This Form is also audible to the ear that does not want to dominate and thereby to deaden itself against the initiative of God in the Form of the Word. The Scriptures of the Hindus distinguish between mundane sound and transcendental Sound. The dominating ear can receive only mundane sound. The dominating voice can utter only dead words. These functions take place on the plane of the eclipsing potency. They are off the plane of Reality. But nevertheless Reality is also only one. The eclipsing potency does not exist apart from the Reality. It is a particular function of the enlightening, i.e. the substantive or real potency. But the two things are also incompatible from our point of view.

It is not possible to follow all these details in the proper manner by the negative method of exposition that alone is at our disposal. The

Name alone can help us to obtain a footing on the positive plane of Reality. It will cost us nothing to agree to accept the method. It does not involve the sacrifice or curtailment of any rival principle. As a matter of fact there is no really rival principle to Truth. This will be realised if we agree to serve the Truth in the positive manner.

The Hindu Scriptures in the form of the Word draw the personality of God, Who reserves the right of not being exposed to the piece-meal dominating activity of the human senses and mind. It is for this reason that the office of the sādhu as medium of communication for bringing about the Descent of the Word in the form of the Sound, Who can also be properly served only by sādhu, is absolutely necessary to save us from depriving ourselves of the study of the Scriptures by the unskilful use of our faculties.

The personality of Sree Chaitanya has been depicted by his devotees. There is nothing ambiguous in their delineation of the activities of Chaitanya. The only difficulty is that we are not fully prepared to study the narrative in the light supplied by the writers. We always

suppose that we are better judges of the subject-matter for our purpose than anybody else. But this is not so in the case of the conditioned soul. He cannot possess the true purpose in studying such a narrative. He must, therefore, submit to derive his purpose also from the narrative itself. If he sincerely tries to do so, he should find that it is impossible for him to understand most things. He should not, therefore, reach the mistaken conclusion that it is not possible or necessary to try to understand the whole position. This kind of despair is responsible for the currency of imperfect and misleading versions of the narrative.

The sādhu who is on the plane of the Absolute does not feel helpless in the same way as the non-devotee. The helplessness of the sādhu in the presence of God is not an exhibition of his ignorance of the Truth. It is a part of the process of his central progressive realisation of God in and through His service. It is the substantive nature of true humility. The helplessness of the non-devotee is only his unsubmitiveness and perversity.

Is it possible for the ordinary reader not to regard the subject of this study as an historical person ? Can God be also historical person in this sense ? If the reader approaches the subject of the narrative as an historical person, can he be expected to blame his own judgment for this mistaken assumption instead of rejecting Sree Chaitanya's claim to be given an unbiassed hearing through his devotees ? Sree Chaitanya is described as having the form which exactly resembles that of a human being. His form is described in minute detail. The method of these writers is to record everything about Sree Caitanya that comes within their recollection.

The personal appearance has very much to do with the personality of God. Certain things about the Name has already been told here. The Name is identical with His Form in the case of God. The Form implies contour of the body, width and height of the body, colour of the body, substance of the body, limbs of the body, expressions of the face, eyes etc. These can be perceived directly only by the eye. These particulars are described in the narrative by

means of language. When therefore it is said that the Name is identical with the Form, it means that the ear, which can hear the Name, can also perceive the Form. It also means that the ear can see the Form only by trying to hear the Form of God by looking at Him even when he appears in His apparently visible Form in this world.

Such statements should not be considered as opposed to all ordinary experience. What is our ordinary conception of personality? Do we leave out all reference to the physical appearance from our idea of personality? There would then be no personality if it were also properly applicable only to personality. Individuality has, however, reference to the difference between one entity and another. But personality has reference to the whole position of the individual.

But in this world personality is mainly connected with conduct and character. It is by no means completely identified with the name. Thus the whole of an individual entity is not equally brought under the principle of personality. Emphasis is laid not only upon

the possession of conscious initiative but of a clear purpose in every respect. The Scriptures declare that the Name of God is identical with the Personality of God and is also more easily approachable than even the visible Form of God.

But the Name of God is also the possessor of power. It never appears unattended by power. The power of the Name is also a person. The sādhu is such a person. Therefore, the Name always appears on the lips of the sādhu. The Name also appears in the records of the Scriptures. But in the Scriptures the Name does not possess the Form of the Sound. In the records the symbol of His Form is visible to the eye. The eye cannot see the Form of God nor communicate Him to the ear. The proper sequence of the process is reversed when we try to approach God by the study of the records instead of by listening to the Word in the Form of Sound from the lips of the sādhu.

The name of Sree Chaitanya is identical with his personality. It is possible for one to approach the Name of Sree Chaitanya even in one's conditioned state. The Name of Krishna can be approached through the Name

of Chaitanya. This is possible because Sree Chaitanya is the same Person as Sree Krishna. But the personality of Sree Chaitanya corresponds also to his function as the servant of Sree Krishna. The personality of Sree Chaitanya is not a separate entity different from the entity of Krishna. The personality of Sree Chaitanya is the complementary factor of the same person. Sree Krishna includes His servant. The Form of God as Master includes that of His servant. God is also never servant of any other person. But He is the only Master of all other persons.

It is, therefore, necessary to be cautious in approaching the personality of Sree Chaitanya. He must not be regarded as an individual soul. He should not also be considered to be anything else than Krishna. The role of His servant belongs eternally to Krishna as the Absolute. In Him, the servant is identical with the Master, and in approaching Him as the servant we must not cease to remember that He is also the Master. If one tries to approach him only as the servant of Krishna, he commits the mistake of ignoring his personality as Master. This is the only caution that it is necessary to practise

by those who wish to follow the teachings of Sree Chaitanya as recorded by his associates and followers.

The objection to our acceptance of an historical personage is not insurmountable. Why should not one object to be instructed by any one else except God? When we approach the devotee of God, to be instructed about God, we do so with the conviction that God Himself teaches us through the mouth of His devotee. But at the same time we do not consider the devotee to be the same person as God. We regard the devotee as the medium of the divine message to us. But the question as to the nature of the personality of the devotee should also engage our most serious attention. It is necessary to be acquainted with the nature of the personality of the devotee for the reason that every person is not a transparent medium of communication of the Truth to conditioned souls. But it is also impossible to recognise the transparent medium by the resources of one's conditioned state. In order that all conditioned souls may be eligible to distinguish rightly between the transparent and opaque mediums

Sree Chaitanya himself appeared in this world in his eternal divine form and role of his own servant or of the perfect devotee.

It is not less impossible to recognise the devotee of God, than God Himself. The devotee always stands between God and His worshippers. It is never possible for any one to approach God except through His devotees. So that devotee is both distinct and non-different from the personality of the Divinity.

If the career of Sree Chaitanya be approached in the cautious manner with due and sincere admission of all reservations for avoiding misunderstanding, it should be possible for all persons by his grace in the form of the divine narrative to realise the necessity of seeking the unconditional guidance of the real sādhu, as the very first step in one's endeavour towards the attainment of self-knowledge:

The personality of Sree Chaitanya has accordingly been declared by his devotees as being identical with the teaching of the whole body of the Scriptures, both as the means of communication and as the entity of the Absolute. But the personality of Sree Chaitanya

is nevertheless primarily the personality of the best of His servants. Those, therefore, who seek to approach him as the Master who is not also servant commit an offence no less serious than those who regard him as servant who is not also the Master. The proper manner of approaching him is to regard him as the Master revealing his personality of servant, in order to accept our services as his servants in his own form of servant.

In this world, especially in the most highly civilised societies, it is generally considered superior to be no respecter of persons in one's dealings with actual persons. Even discussions of the personality of the heroes of this world, who are dead and gone, are conducted in the approved impersonal manner. No educated person of these days would care to listen patiently to long descriptions of matters that are purely personal and have no bearing on general interests. We accordingly try to make even personal accounts appear, as much as possible, like a general narrative. This prevailing impersonalism of thought and conduct is probably the greatest proof of the disesteem in which the

concrete entities of this world are held by the best minds of this rational Age.

But there cannot be a greater blunder than to carry the attitude into our conduct and talk with regard to spiritual subjects. The reason of this should be quite plain to every thoughtful person. It is necessary to avoid any reference to the concrete of this world for ^{the}avoiding real unwholesomeness. But the concrete on the spiritual plane is concentrated wholesomeness. Impersonal discussions of spiritual subjects are only preliminaries and, if they are to possess any truth, should always point to this peculiarity of spiritual existence. Just as discussions about mundane concretes require to be made really interesting by frequent references to their bearing the general position, in exactly the same way and for a similar reason it is equally necessary to introduce frequently references to the spiritual concrete in all general discussions about spiritual entities, in spite of their apparent incongruity with the formed tastes and habits of the people of this world.

If one considers the real position of the present philosophical studies, one should agree

to the fact that their sterility is patent to all impartial thinkers. Scientific men turn to the mundane concrete for avoiding this infertility of the philosophical method of enquiry. Even psychological studies do not possess that firm basis that can be handled by all our different senses at any moment that we like and without opposition on the part of the entities that are so handled. The speculative and tentative character of psychological conclusions is not, however, any condemnation of the enquiry itself, but it is proof of the defects of the method of enquiry that does not reach the reliability and precision of the scientific standard actually attained in the spheres of more concrete objects.

The first thing for us to do, if we want a really scientific method of enquiry for spiritual subjects, is to try to obtain access to concrete and definite objects that can be properly approached by the senses. The Name of God is the only spiritual entity that is said to be approachable by our sense of hearing if we are disposed to adjust it in the proper manner to acquire actual contact with transcendence. This truth is presented to us as the personality of

Sree Chaitanya. His career is a search for the Truth on the lines of the teachings of the revealed Scriptures. This is no hypothetical search as is practised with barren philosophies by a misapplication of the scientific method. The Supreme Lord reveals to us the spiritual personality of His devotee who is the eternal seeker of His service. This function can be understood, in the scientific sense, only in terms of personality in its all-inclusive sense. We must not, however, try to whittle down the very principle of personality by impersonal predilections engendered by our long experience of the unwholesome perverted shadow of the real personality.

The transcendental Sound from the lips of the sādhu will do every thing for us in this matter. It will introduce us to the Plane of the Absolute. It will relieve us from the necessity of chasing the shadow either concretely or by generalised and essentially negative methods. These are the opposite defects of the current scientific and philosophical studies, neither of which has any real access to the plane of Absolute Truth.

CHAPTER IV

PHILOSOPHY OF SREE CHAITANYA

Every philosophy considers mainly three factors, viz. the observers, the observed and observation. Now, amongst the seekers of God, it has been seen that one of the two processes of Induction and Deduction has been adopted in their search. In the first process of inductive investigation of the Absolute Truth, one relies on sense-perception, drawing inferences from the manifested phenomena. Owing to the changeable nature of the objects of phenomena and the defective nature of human senses, the process of Induction or empiric method adopted in the search of God may be compared with the attempt of an individual to collect all the electric lights of a town in one place at the dead hours of the night in order to see the sun on the firmament ! The process is futile. Sree

Chaitanya rejected this empiric process of accepting material help for the realisation of the transcendental Reality. But those who are conscious of the defective nature of their physical and mental senses, owing to the limitations and changeableness of time and space, adopt the "Revealed Method", which inculcates that God reveals Himself in the shape of transcendental Word, identical with His form, attributes, entourage and pastimes, through an unalloyed chain of preceptorial successions, to the submissive aural reception of sincere and willing listeners. This is called the process of Divine Descent or *Avatāra*. This possibility of the descent of the Divinity in the form of the Word is noticed in the beginning of St. John, where it is mentioned like this: "In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God." The Name of God is the fundamental principle on which the whole philosophy of Sree Chaitanya rests.

To discuss a particular philosophy, one has to consider the nature of the observed, i.e. the object of pursuit ; next he should understand the nature of the observer, and that will then

lead him to the conclusion i.e. the relation that exists between the two.

In theology, God is the Object of pursuit, the individual souls are the observers or seekers, and the eternal relationship between God and souls is the eternal religion of all souls. This relationship forms the subject-matter of Sree Chaitanya's philosophy.

Regarding the nature of God, Sree Chaitanya says that in aryan theology there are three distinct conceptions of the Absolute. The pantheists or monists hold that God is Impersonal, Who has been termed as *Brahma* in the Upanishads, the crest jewels of the Vedas. Sree Chaitanya has shown that this Impersonal *Brahma* is the Negative Aspect of the Absolute. To the empiricists, this Neuter-God or It-God is the synthetic Abstract of the Reality. From the diversities and manifoldness of the phenomenal world, one is naturally inclined to a synthetic approach to the Absolute, Who is conceived as One Unit. Just as the manifestness of a hill with all its diversities in its unity is not conceived when looked at from a long distance, so also the transcendental personality of the

Divinity is not realised from the angle of a macroscopic vision of such empiricists. The Immanent Aspect of God is known as *Paramātmā*—the Indweller of every entity, of the Yoga School; whereas the fullest manifestation of God, as *Bhagavān*, is His transcendental personality possessing all-glory, all-majesty, all-beauty, all-power, all-intelligence and all-freedom. Sree Chaitanya's conception of God is this *Bhagavān*.

Every individual sentient being is endowed with the faculties of cognition, emotion and volition. Viewed through cognition alone, irrespective of the emotional and volitional faculties of the pure soul, God's existence is realised as the All-pervasive 'Great'—the Undivided Knowledge, known as *Brahma*; approached through the soul's volitional insight, the Divinity is realised in every entity, as *Paramātmā*—everything is accommodated in the Great *Brahma*, and in every sentient and insentient entity the Divinity exists as the Indwelling Lord, called *Paramātmā*; both these are partial and qualitative approaches; while when one submits unconditionally and

unreservedly with one's all the three cognitional, emotional and volitional faculties, the Supreme Lord as *Bhagavān* manifests Himself in His most beautiful Person in the purest heart of such a genuine devotee. This conception of *Bhagavān* of the devotional school has two distinct Aspects, the Majestic and the Beatific. His Majestic Manifestation in the transcendental Realm is called *Nārāyana*, while His Beatific Aspect is *Krishna*. God with all His Majestic functions is worshipped with reverential services. Krishna, the Lord of Love and Beauty, is the Recipient of confidential services in any of the five-fold aspects of Quiet-God, Master-God, Friend-God, Son-God and Consort-God. Krishna, as the only Object of divine pursuit, is according to the philosophy of Sree Chaitanya, the Recipient of loving services from His Ecstatic Energy. His Consortship is His Highest Manifestation.

As regards the transcendental nature of Krishna, Sree Chaitanya says that Krishna is the Divine Person. He is neither a hero, nor an allegorical factor, nor a historical person, nor a voluptuous enjoyer like any human being. Krishna is the *only* Proprietor, and everything

else belongs to Him. Krishna is inaccessible to sensuous attempts and inconceivable by human physical, mental or intellectual senses. He is accessible to transcendental knowledge and absolute submission. He is the Chief Emporium of all mellow-principles of divine love. He is the Efficient or root Cause of all causes of the sentient and insentient worlds. Krishna is the Supreme Godhead and the Internal Guide of all. He is Unborn and yet has an eternal Form of His Own. He is the Highest among the Objects of worship. Krishna is eternal and beyond all the scope of all measuring potencies. Krishna is the Friend of all and the Embodiment of All-being, All-knowledge and All-bliss. He is true of speech and resolve. He is the true exponent of religion and is satisfied with the taste of Self-delight.

In considering the "Observed", Sree Chaitanya goes on further to say that Krishna is All-powerful and His Potencies are inseparable from Him. He is identical with His Internal Plenary Potency. This Plenary Potency has three Aspects, viz. His Internal Self-luminous Controlling Potency, from Whom emanates the

eternal transcendental Realm which is beyond the limits of mundane time and space ; secondly, His External Deluding Potency from which proceeds the material universe with its time, space, elements etc. ; and thirdly, the Marginal Potency, which gives rise to innumerable infinitesimal souls, having the innate nature of either rendering loving service to God in their devotional aptitude or lording it over the phenomenal world in an enjoying mood or renouncing them in a spirit of abnegation.

Next, it may be mentioned here in a nutshell about what Sree Chaitanya speaks about the conception of the "observers". The *jivas* or individual souls are the seekers of God. These souls in their unalloyed and unfettered state of existence are the atomic or infinitesimal separated parts of the Internal Self-conscious Potency of Krishna. As sentient beings, they have their proportionate share of the faculties of cognition, emotion and volition. The volitional faculty of an individual soul indicates the free will in man. Those who are conscious of the limitations of the capacities of their gross and subtle senses, which are apparently the only

recipient of knowledge based on inferences and gained from the manifested phenomena, make the best use of their free will by surrendering themselves entirely to the grace of the Supreme Lord Sree Krishna. They are then supported by His Internal Potency in the shape of the Divine Master or Guru. This kind of eternal service with body, mind and soul under all circumstances is known as the unfettered or free state of existence even when one is living in this world in his mortal coil. But those who entirely depend upon their own limited and deceptive knowledge, forget their real nature and abuse their free will by endeavouring to lord it over the phenomenal world. They are either too optimistic and give themselves to the enjoyment of the world or they turn out to be pessimists and take refuge in renunciation. Deluded by the External Potency they are thus enwrapped with the two garments of the gross body of flesh and blood and the subtle body of the mind. They are then hurled down into this limited world of weal and woe, and can be redeemed only by submission to a true Spiritual Guru. This state of forgetfulness of the real

and normal nature of a pure soul is known as the fallen. No amount of empiric knowledge or any other mechanical procedure can be sufficient to liberate the fallen souls from the bondage of illusion.

Further, according to the philosophy of Sree Chaitanya, on the Plane of transcendence things are identical with their names, forms, attributes and actions. But in the phenomenal world, objects are different from their names, forms, attributes and actions. Though there is a semblance between things spiritual and material, they are not identically the same. In the Kingdom of God, the Supreme Lord is Absolute, because He reserves the absolute right of not being exposed to or realisable by human senses or human reasoning, which are confined within the four walls of time and mundane space. The finite conception can at best measure things of three dimensions and cannot go beyond them. That which can go beyond the ambit of three dimensions is transcendence, which ranges from the fourth to infinite dimensions. The Absolute Person transcends mundane limits and does

not submit to sensuous experiences and mental speculations.

Sree Chaitanya has shown the distinct functions of mind and soul. In the mundane plane, the mind as an agent of the soul is ever engaged in trying to enjoy the phenomena through the agencies of the ten organs of sense and action. Its activities are entirely restricted to the plane of limitations, it itself being of a fleeting nature. As a perverted ego, it assumes the role of the subject or enjoyer. It is after all a subtle form of matter and acquires its initiative faculty from the soul, which is at present lying in a dormant state within the cage of the mind, just as a piece of red-hot iron acquires its burning property from the fire with which it comes in contact. In its enjoying or renouncing attitude, it is captured and enslaved by the Eclipsing Potency 'of the All-powerful Supreme Lord Sree Krishna, and suffers pains or enjoys pleasures during its sojourn in this world.

But the soul is quite distinct from and independent of the body and mind. She is a spiritual entity and her eternal function is

unalloyed service or devotion to God, of Whom she is an atomic separated part, yet inseparably associated with Him by the tie of divine love. Her eternal existence in her real nature is in the spiritual realm, though she may have her subtle and gross bodies in the material world. She neither accepts nor rejects, neither enjoys nor abnegates things of the phenomenal world. She is neither the subject nor an object of Nature. When the soul wakes up from her present dormant state of existence by listening to the Name of Krishna from the lips of a genuine Spiritual Master, she realises her true self to be an eternal servant and property of the *only* Proprietor of all entities, God. The soul has no other function but to render reverential or loving service to the Divine Autocrat. The soul is at present under the influence of the mind and body owing to its forgetfulness of its true normal nature, and the mind is now a dominating factor, which is the greatest foe of its master, the soul. Senses are superior to the body, mind is superior to the senses, intelligence is superior to mind, and the soul is by far superior to all of them. Once the normal and eternal

function of the fettered soul is awakened, the mind and body become helpful in the service of God.

The soul awakens when she gives up her enjoying and renouncing temperament and hears with submission the Divine Word, identical with God. Transcendental Words entering the ears regulate her dominant mind and other physical senses and remove the obstacles and impediments that stand on the way of her awakening.

Thus the two sides of a philosophical background are shown, and now the link that exists between God and individual souls should be noted. In the language of Sree Chaitanya, his school of philosophy is known as *Achintya Bhedabheda*. It means that there is an inconceivable simultaneous existence of distinction and non-difference between God and soul. As against the atheistic, sceptic, agnostic or pantheistic philosophies, there are in Hinduism four other principal schools of theistic philosophies of the Vaishnavas. They are *Distinctive Monotheism* of Sree Rāmānuja, *Undifferentiated Monotheism* of Vishnuswāmi, *Dualistic Monotheism* of Nimbārka and *Dualism* of Sree

Madhva. There are certain points of agreements as well as differences in these schools of thoughts of the four Vaishnaba Teachers; but they all fundamentally agree on the conception of Vishnu as the Supreme Transcendental Person of Divinity, Who is the All-powerful Lord. Sree Chaitanya gave a final touch to them all, and harmonised all the different schools in his *Achintya Bhedābheda*.

The philosophy of *Achintya Bhedābheda* approaches the relationship between God and individual souls from both sides of the subject. It transcends the discordant diversities of the phenomenal world, limited by mundane time and space. Sree Sankara tried to synthesise the diversities. Sree Chaitanya was not satisfied with that alone. He realised that there was a beauty in manifoldness—analytical aspect is one of the fundamental principles of the creation of God. Unity and diversity must be recognised simultaneously. It can be equally applied to the relationship between God and souls. This simultaneous existence of difference and non-difference between God and soul is inconceivable and incomprehensible to the present human

understanding. Intellectual reasoning is not sufficient to appreciate it. When one is free from the misidentification of his true self from the physical and mental coverings, temporarily put on him by the influences of *Māyā* because of his own folly in denying himself the eternal service of God, it can be realised by the unalloyed faculties of the soul that in the qualitative aspects the souls are identical with God in essence, whereas there are eternal differences between God and soul quantitatively. When we say, 'different', we do not mean that there is any intervention of the factors of time and space. The threefold differences of this world as between man and man, man and beasts, and hands and legs of the same individual, do not exist in God's Kingdom. It is a plane of animate existence. Everything is *chetan*; nothing is inactive and without any initiative there; it is a question of an Undivided Knowledge. The very conception of diversities of this world, or an imaginary unity of phenomena do not find any place on the plane of transcendence. And yet there is distinctiveness in a Unique Whole.

An example may be taken. There is the sun and its innumerable rays. Every particular ray possesses undoubtedly all the qualities of the sun in a proportionate degree—a particular ray of the sun cannot be detached wholly from the sun by the intervention of time and space, and is inseparably associated. On the other hand, a ray is not the sun ; it is only a fractional part of the sun. Similarly, all souls emanate from God and are essentially identical with Him. God is eternal and so are the souls ; God is All-knowledge, and so also the souls possess a proportionate degree of knowledge and a cognitive faculty ; blissfulness is common in the nature of both God and soul. At the same time, God is the Whole, while a soul is an infinitesimal part of the Whole ; God is the Lord of the potency, called *Māyā*, and is never influenced by her—*Māyā* is subservient to God, whereas a soul can be overpowered by the influences of the Deluding Energy, *Māyā* ; God is One, souls are many ; God is the Proprietor, souls are properties ; God is never shackled by the bondage of the gross and subtle bodies like the souls ; God never forgets His Own Nature,

while souls who are bound down by the forces of *Māyā*, forget their own true nature and their normal functions remain inactive in their abnormal existence in this world of changeable phenomena. In this sense, there are identities and differences that co-exist in the eternal relationship between God and individual souls. God Who is Krishna, according to Sree Chaitanya, is the Divine Attractor, and souls are the attracted, and the connection between God and souls is attraction, which is called Divine Love. This Divine Love is the relationship between the two, which is Chaitanya's philosophy.

Thus did Sree Chaitanya enumerate the three Aspects of the Absolute Reality. The Impersonal Aspect is, according to him, a negative and imperfect manifestation of God. It is one-sided, approached qualitatively. In essence this is perfectly correct. But this is not all. An Impersonal *Brahma* is the Ultimate End of the empiric school, as it cannot go beyond because of its own limitations, the arguments being based on limited sense-experience. They begin with a pre-supposition that God can have no form, name, attributes or actions, as if they are to be

reserved only for men of the world ! Sree Chaitanya is very particular in his discussion on Divinity. God is not to be anthropomorphised or apotheosised by our mental speculation. The perfection of all positivism is in Him—the transcendental Name, Form, Attributes, Entourage and Actions of God must be catagorically differentiated from the very conception of them that we possess today in this material plane. We use the same expressions, but they do not mean literally the same.

CHAPTER V

TEACHINGS OF SREE CHAITANYA

In order to follow the teachings of Sree Chaitanya, it is necessary and helpful to know his environment, and India in the 16th century. The historical method of interpretation seeks for an explanation of the tenets and rituals of a creed in the environment of its origin and early propagation. It is assumed that religion is an attempt to supply the earthly needs of the time when it is being preached. People generally accept religion to the extent that it is in a position to satisfy such needs. But our needs change, and an old religion which was accepted at a particular period and environment, gradually tends to lose its teleological justification. It begins to act as a clog to retard the further progress of society, due to its pretensions to infallibility and the unquestioning obedience of its followers. For this reason the old creeds are supposed to have been replaced by new ones as necessity arose. This is a very wrong view of religion. Religion does not appear in this world

for supplying our material wants. Religion removes the spiritual famine of humanity. It does not depend on the material circumstances of a country. But it also greatly takes a shape according to the spiritual needs and ability of a people at a particular time. The same truth cannot be equally appreciated and acknowledged by all classes of people under all circumstances. With the development of the souls' functions, religion is revealed to us to that degree. But ordinarily people have tried to approach religion historically, which very often gives us a wrong impression. At the same time the relevant relativity between the message of religion at a particular period and the circumstances of that period cannot be overlooked.

In India Buddhism represents the historical attempt to overthrow the Vedic religion, the origin of which does not lie within the historical period. Modern historians are inclined to hold that the current religion of the Hindus owes its origin to a polytheistic reaction in favour of the worship of popular gods and deified national heroes ; Buddhism gave a rationalistic moral teaching. But Hinduism claims to

be identical with the pre-Buddhistic Vedic religion.

Unfortunately the knowledge of the early history of India is not very perfect. The religion of India possesses a vast extant literature. This has not been studied in the way that it should be read. But the records have preserved a fairly intelligible account of the doctrines and practices of the different Indian religious schools. A considerable part of these records is of a highly polemical character. This affords the opportunity of learning about the comparative valuation of the creeds in terms of one another from the parties themselves.

Lack of sincere sympathy for the existing religious beliefs and practices of the Hindus is the real reason why Europeans neglect to study the religious literature of India in a truly spiritual light. The historians and philologists are responsible for creating this unfavourable opinion against spiritual India. The failure of Hindus to achieve material progress and political recognition has been easily attributed to strange beliefs contained in their Scriptures. India's claim to spiritual superiority is supposed

to be disproved by this patent backwardness of the Hindus in secular affairs. A growing section of the educated Hindus have also lost all faith in their spiritual life and traditional religion, or any religion, and are drifting towards avowed atheism. A still more numerous section has become non-orthodox and inclined for liberal reform. All this has added to the volume of apathy against Indian religious literature. The conservative wing of the educated Hindus have also been unable to meet their critics in fair argument and to convince them of their error.

But present conditions in India are different from those that prevailed during the 16th century. The Brāhmanas were then the respected teachers of religion to all sections of Hindus. They were held in the highest social esteem on account of their unworldly life. Those Brāhmanas followed with a rigid mechanical faith the supposed immutable ways of their pious ancestors. They were also great adepts in hair-splitting argument in a circle ad nauseam. Their studies did not embrace the entire literature but only a few books treating of particular current opinions.

They did not care at all for the actual facts and problems of life, in their religious thought. Works on Natural Science were not non-existent but they were not taught by the Brāhmanas and seem to have been left to the lower caste teachers from among the clever hereditary craftsmen of the country. At Nabadwipa the favourable subject of study of the Brāhmanas was the New Logic. The curricula in the Brāhmana academies were confined to lifeless scholastic studies.

There had been no renaissance in India. The people possessed undisturbed faith in the scholastic methods. Even the shock of foreign conquest, which subjected the country to the rule of less civilised tribes professing an alien and hostile religion, could not ween the Brāhmanas from their devotion to abstract studies. The cause of this was deep-seated. A rooted indifference to the requirements of worldly life had become second nature with the Brāhmanas. The positive mood, which had been inculcated by the profound and varied theistic literature of the country, had been utterly forgotten and had made way for the complicated lifeless rituals,

without trying to understand their real significance, backed by an illusionist philosophy.

A number of eminent theistic teachers had, indeed, tried from time to time to re-establish the positive and spiritual view of the responsibilities of human life. But their teaching had been misunderstood and misapplied by their own followers. The country, therefore, presented a curious spectacle of being dominated by a lifeless so-called monotheistic creed in the South and by an active theistic polythiesm in the North with busy centres of futile scholastic studies sprinkled all over the country. *Smārta* (henotheistic) theology, the outcome of the senile and decadent materialistic superstition, prevailed everywhere and had the powerful backing of the philosophy of Sankara. It was a most distressing state of affairs. In this society Sree Chaitanya was born into a learned Brāhmaṇa family of Nabadwipa, which was one of the great centres of scholastic learning.

Sree Chaitanya did not want the people to follow or preach the real meaning of theistic Scripture by the proper exercise of their individual judgment, as was proposed by Martin

Luther in Germany at this period as a remedy against the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church. Sree Chaitanya occasionally used the controversial method. But he was opposed to a rationalistic interpretation of the Scriptures. He discouraged mental speculation in every form. He, however, made available the method that could lead to the transcendental concrete. He enunciated the proper attitude that it was necessary to adopt towards the religious literature and institutions of the country in order to understand their true meaning. He did not identify himself with any of the sectarian schools of religious thought. He was also not exactly a reformer. He was the living embodiment of the ideal that the quest of the Absolute is the proper method of search for Truth and this makes all revelations available to the unprejudiced, ardent seeker of the Truth.

Would his teachings have proved more acceptable to Europe at that period ? It is very difficult to answer such a question. There were great obstacles in the way. Materialistic positivism was on the point of capturing the imagination of the intellectual class of Western

Europe. The fight between scientific materialism and semitic altruism had already begun and was to result, in these days, in the virtual triumph of the former.

The Semitic thought lays stress upon morality and altruism. Also upon the spiritual values. Judaism is monotheistic, insistent upon the Oneness of God as the source of all spiritual power. Thus God is "formless" in the material sense, though Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient. Christianity's cardinal principle is a great deal more than that; Christ also preached Love, and insisted upon the fact that the Kingdom of Heaven was within mankind and that it was incumbent upon man to develop the spiritual values of his personality so that he might hasten "the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth". Christ also said: "First seek ye the Kingdom of God and all else shall be added unto you", meaning that by attaining God, man attains his own highest fulfilment. In this way, there was no doubt certain similarities of ideas between Judaism and Sankara philosophy, and Christianity and the Vaishnava thoughts. But the principle "Do unto others

as you would that they should do unto you" puts the position of the Christian altruism in a nutshell. This advice has to realise the fact that our secondary nature craves for sensuous enjoyment. It is essentially an individualistic craving.

Sree Chaitanya agreeing with the theistic or Vaishnava literature of India went beyond the cult of mere altruism and propounded his doctrine that exclusive service to God, the Predominating Personal Principle, was the natural function of all souls. He said that by the service of God alone every thing else would be best served. Altruism by itself was very limited and therefore defective. By the service of man, one is never sure of serving God, though by engaging oneself in the service of God, one decidedly serves the whole humanity to its perfection.

Under such influence of religious thoughts in India and the West, Sree Chaitanya promulgated his own doctrine independent of them all, though they might have a certain bearing.

Sree Chaitanya laid emphasis on the fact that the impulse to seek God remains dormant

as long as the soul permits herself to be swayed by the disposition towards indulgence or abnegation born of the flesh. The soul becomes aware of the incompatibility of her condition with the full satisfaction of her highest natural instincts only by the slow degrees, through the teaching of experience.

The doctrine of metempsychosis has its teleological reference to this psychological experience. If a soul is not cured of her evil hankerings within a single life-time, should she be refused a second chance? Some people take a stern view of the duty of the conditioned state. If the offered chance is wilfully disregarded the defaulter is adjudged, according to them, to lose a further chance. This is by no means an unreasonable view of the grave responsibilities of human life. It supplies the moral and religious life with its salutary sanction, and vindicates its reality.

But such a view makes God the possessor of very limited resources. It supplies no satisfactory answer to the question of the genesis of evil. It makes the relationship of man to God as that of a prisoner in the dock before the awful judge.

Thus the whole significance of life is made to shrink to a dry and pedantic narrowness. The formality and rigidity of an absolute pattern of man-made law ; the terribly imperfect procedure of the human judicial tribunal ; the vindictive and trivial nature of the entire conception then stands forth in all its insufficiency to the balanced view of all right-thinking persons.

In speculating about God, it is not necessary to admit *a priori* the finality or perfection of the law that regulates the affairs of man. The whole position requires to be carefully considered in all its aspects, present, past and prospective. The promulgators of Utopias have done the greatest possible service to the soul of man by teaching him to take an extended view of his duties and responsibilities.

Freedom of thought and action for the individual against the restricted injunctions formulated by any external authority, is the justifiable repudiation of rigid moral codes among non-Hindu religions. This advocacy of individual freedom is characteristically associated with the more intellectual and artistic Greek temperament. This refined liberal thought began

to spread in Europe from the time of the Renaissance.

The forces of liberalism thus unchained were not to be stayed by the warnings of enemy or well-wisher. They went on demolishing and experimenting with every institution. They launched out on the most daring speculations, and recklessly sacrificed leisure, life and property for the exploration of suspected avenues of advancement of free enquiry. They ate greedily the fruits of the tree of knowledge in utter disregard of the experience of Adam and Eve. These forces are by no means defunct, and show no signs of any loss of initiative and enterprise. They have never aimed at producing stability and contentment. They have sought to find their chief glory and satisfaction in the terrific volume of commercial and industrial activity and vast material prosperity of modern times. They have also given rise to the modern democracy with its stubborn socialistic and communistic proclivities.

The Protestant movement in Europe was essentially a reaction against asceticism and mystic sacerdotalism, and a return to the ideal

of frank enjoyment of life formulated by the scientific epicurianism of the Greeks. Commercialism and industrialism were necessary for the realisation of the Greek ideal. Politics also acquired its decidedly exploiting ideal through an insatiable hankering after a life of enjoyment. The Roman Church has sustained its losing fight on behalf of asceticism and a new sacerdotalism against the Protestant movement. But even in Roman Catholic countries, in spite of the organised opposition offered by the Roman Catholic Church, the spirit of Greek secularism influenced the populace no less effectively than in the Protestant countries. Such were the state of affairs of european religious conceptions.

Sree Chaitanya has approved neither of the enjoying nor the abnegating ideal of life. He teaches us that both methods are equally unsatisfactory as they tend to perpetuate the degrading slavery of man's soul to the appetites and passions of the flesh through the treacherous contrivance of the mind. He appeals to the soul to strive to shake off her infatuation and to awake to her own really free and natural

disposition. In the matter of choosing to move in this direction, the initiative lies wholly with the individual soul. But the soul is not the master of her future. Even her natural spiritual function is inadequate for the realisation of her own legitimate object. The soul of man requires the constant support of her environment. She also stands in need of continuous and effective guidance from within. The realisation of the necessity of this support in its proper form does not abolish the freedom of the individual initiative within its scope. On the other hand it ensures the fullest scope for such initiative in the only true form.

It is possible for the soul to recover her free initiative only with the guiding help of her natural support. It is the soul's prerogative to recognise this support if she chooses to be true to her real self. The soul of man is neither mind nor body. In the enslaved state man chooses to consider his soul to be free from all guidance and to be identical with his body and mind. He can learn the truth if he earnestly seeks the same from the proper Master who is always with him even when he does not seem to see him

nor hear his voice. The term 'conscience' is a misnomer and is not the voice of the inner Divine Guide. The so-called 'conscience' is a secondary excrescence masquerading as the voice of the Inner Guide. Only a clear purpose can enable the soul to distinguish between the false and the true Guide. The willing soul finds the true Guide both inside and outside. The soul who is false to herself is deluded by the contrivances of her mind and body into the strange notion that she is a self-contained entity as is not perpetually sustained by internal and external support in every form. When she is really enslaved she supposes herself to be really free. While she is a slave she resents as grave affront any advice that is incompatible with her own misuse of her free will guaranteed and maintained by God. Only rarely is this insensibility to the Voice of the Truth actually overcome by the confirmed slave of his appetites. This is the root cause of all evils that flesh is heir to. 'Truth', says the wise proverb, 'is stranger than fiction.' But Truth is also more unacceptable than any form of falsehood to the sophisticated judgment of offending humanity.

There are self-realised souls in this world, despite the elaborate incredulity of the sophisticated intellect of the modern world. Self-realised souls become in their turn the sub-agents of the Agents of God. Only those, whose souls do not unduly covet the things of the world, nor, on the contrary, cherish any futile repugnance to them, are in a position to recognise the genuine agents, and welcome them to their hearts when they present themselves unsolicited at their door with the message of God, in due course in the performance of their natural functions as His servants by word and deed.

It is only when the willing soul is helped by such guidance to find her natural function on the plane of the Absolute that she is in a position to exercise to the full her true initiative without offending any other entity. This truth is perversely reflected in the enjoying and abnegating aptitudes of the conditioned soul who chooses to be false to herself. As soon as the truth is preached to such a soul, even when she seems to attend to the same, she is sometimes apt perversely to suppose it to be only a further justification of her own deluded conduct.

The spiritual issue was put in an unambiguous form in the mouth of Sree Sanātana, when Sanātana approached Sree Chaitanya at Benares after his renunciation of the Ministership of Bengal under its Muslim Governor. Sanātana put the following questions to Sree Chaitanya : Who am I ? Why am I afflicted with misery ? Why am I ignorant of the path of my well-being ?

Sanātana had been the Chief Minister of King Hossain Shah, as has already been described. He had been too important a person to be permitted to live far from the King. When, therefore, he made up his mind to renounce the world and throw himself unreservedly at the feet of Sree Chaitanya, and prayed to his royal master to be relieved of his office, he was kept under close surveillance within the prison-cell. Sanātana effected his escape by bribing his keepers. He then disguised himself as a *Fakir* (a Muslim monk) and clothed himself in rags. Arriving in this way at Benares, he put the above questions to Sree Chaitanya.

In reply Sree Chaitanya disclosed to him the nature of the relationship between individual

souls and the Absolute. He told him that *Jiva* (individual soul) is the eternal servant of Krishna, being of the same nature as the manifestation of Krishna's marginal power. This manifestation causes *Jiva* to be simultaneously distinct and non-distinct from Krishna—a relation that is inconceivable to the rational mind. The *Jiva's* face has been turned away from Krishna from the beginningless time owing to his forgetfulness of his own nature and that of Krishna. He is afflicted with the miseries of his sojourn in this world by Krishna's external, limiting power, as a corrective for his deliberate self-forgetfulness. When the *Jiva*, reminded of his real entity by some wise soul, turns again to Krishna, the blighting influence of this limiting energy is withdrawn. The *Jiva* then sincerely repents of his transgression and strives to regain his natural heritage.

Every one is in a position to read the account of Sanātana's meeting with Sree Chaitanya in the pages of the *Chaitanya-Charitāmrita*. The teaching has been expanded by Sanātana himself in his work, the *Vrihat Bhāgavatāmrita*, which he wrote according to the instructions of Sree

Chaitanya during his subsequent stay at Vrindā-bana as the authorised original preacher of the 'knowledge of relationship.'

It may be said, therefore, that after the publication of the work of Sanātana all *Jivas* should have been redeemed automatically by the perusal of the book. It remained for Rupa to oppose this assumption on cogent grounds which he has set forth in his great work, *Bhaktirasāmrita-sindhu*, in which he lays down the process and stages of progress of one who seeks the service of God. Sree Rupa is the original authorised Hindu teacher of the practice of devotion in the 16th century.

It is not any form of mental or physical activity, practised by conditioned souls, that Sree Rupa recommends as the process of endeavour to be followed by the seeker of God. Such mental and physical activities promote and consolidate man's aversion to a service of God. It is by means of serving God that his service may be realised. This is effected by the practice of self-realised souls who incorporate some unwilling soul into the service of the Absolute. Until the chance of such unsolicited incorporation is

available and acceptable to the conditioned soul, he cannot possibly attain spiritual enlightenment. It is in and through such unconscious participation in the service of the Absolute that the knowledge of relationship may be realised in proportion as the disposition to serve manifests itself while the longing for mental and physical activity directed to the gratification of the senses, gradually subsides.

Through our experience of this conditioned life of individuals and of the race, the issue that is thought to be fundamental is self-contradictory. Empiric ethics have not yet succeeded in formulating the purpose of its enquiry. It analyses and correlates our experience by the co-operative efforts of individuals and associations. It is a compartmental affair, all such conclusions being relative to the particular stage of growth of our empiric knowledge. The empiric science of ethics can accordingly tell us no more than this : that persons are ordinarily found to conduct themselves in this world for the attainment of certain conceivable and desirable bodily and mental states. The ethical 'ought' is not strictly applicable to such conduct.

Much discussion has also been directed, especially in India, to the formulation of ethical and spiritual issues. It is really only half the answer. Sree Sanātana's questions are those of a person who wants to approach God through his intellect, but finds himself helplessly baffled. Only such a person can be anxious to know about the nature of the issue itself. Sanātana admits that he is not even competent to frame the question of his enquiry, being utterly ignorant of the issue itself. He seeks to be enlightened *ab initio*. His position recalls that of Arjuna in the Geetā when he later submits unconditionally to Krishna for being disciplined into the Truth. The Geetā informs us that a knowledge of the issue is imparted by God only to the seeker who makes his unconditional submission to His Agent, the spiritual preceptor, with a view to being guided in every detail of his subsequent conduct through the resulting spiritual enlightenment. He must agree to co-operate with an open mind in order to remove all practical difficulties.

The genuine enquirer submits unconditionally to the true spiritual Guide so that all

doubts may be dispelled by means of unreserved spiritual communion and whole-hearted spiritual service. God is not at all like a thing that presents itself as an object of cognition to the empiricist. Neither are the process of the cognition and the entity of the cognising ego the same in the two cases. On the contrary, the whole position in the one case is essentially but inconceivably the reverse of the other. God is both Knower and the Knowledge. The enquirer is the atomic object of His knowledge formed for the stuff of reciprocating cognition. God possesses the initiative for manifesting Himself. The person seeking enlightenment must therefore, be willing to follow the lead of God in the manner made known to him. The reciprocating individuality of the servitor is preserved intact if he surrenders only his dominating initiative. The conditioned soul can appreciate, although to a very small extent, the logical proposition that God cannot be subject to the jurisdiction of her limited cognising faculty. If He is not subject to the jurisdiction of her intellect, the conditioned soul is necessarily reduced to the receptive initiative in approaching God.

In the conditioned state we are conscious only of the physico-mental life. This life is external, misleading and hinders our spiritual life. There is also no direct continuity between this life and the spiritual, the two being on different planes. The physico-mental life is of the nature of a twofold external casing for the purpose of deflecting the activities of the soul to the false ego and the limiting plane.

The nature of physico-mental activity is twofold. It is necessary to know its relation to the secondary ego and to the mundane cosmos. It is also necessary to know what is its proper bearing on the soul and the plane of transcendence.

The mundane ego has a real objective existence apart from the soul. This is not apprehensive to the psychologists. Nor would be consistent with their experience to admit the duality of the conditioned state. The psychologist's range of observation and observing ego suffer from the defects of limiting and opposing each other. In his opinion, life is a performance arranged by some very cunning, remorseless and extremely powerful agency, acting by means

of very ingenious processes, characterised by a dead uniformity, cutting across all ethical considerations. This is the psychologist's world. As an observer he is reduced to the thankless task of admiring and seeking hopelessly to adjust his own unrealised self to the ever-shifting complications of a vigilant and hostile environment. The term 'struggle for existence' aptly describes the relationship between the psychologist and his environment. The psychologist is compelled to deny the existence of any other conscious regulating agency behind the operations of the mental and physical laws. But the mental laws also operate with the precision and perfect ethical unconcern that characterise the analogous operations of the electrical energy. They have accordingly been supposed to be the manifestations of electrical power. Such theory makes material energy the basis and ultimate principle of all existence. It regards the phenomena of consciousness and cognitive function also as the temporary, curious bye-products of certain material coincidences. The factors of time, space and mass have, however, defied, up till now, all empiric attempts to reduce their

own categories to a unit as the required basis for consistency of thought. This inconclusiveness of the process, available to the psychologists and all physical scientists, for the determination of truth, cannot and should not be over-looked through admiration of the achievements of the empiric scientific method in the sphere of mechanical functioning.

Empiricists contend that the human mind is steadily drifting towards the truth by the operation of the blind laws of Nature, which is discernible in our improving mentality and instrumentals and an increasingly propitious environment. Each reacts on the other for the purpose of accelerating the maintaining the progress of empiric knowledge.

But one should think it worth one's while to ask, 'for whose benefit is all this so-called progress intended?' It must be for the temporary gratification of our ephemeral mind and body. This gratification also proves utterly disappointing at the moment of its realisation. If it yields any temporary relief, it can do so only by making us forget for the time being the unpleasant abiding factors of our situations. It

acts by similar means to intoxication produced by drugs. Can this be considered the worthy goal of all our toil ? Is this the manna that is to relieve our hunger and thirst in the desert ?

What is then really wrong with us ? Is it not the fact that we habitually over-value both the method and the object of our empiric quest ? Have the psychologists any really satisfactory answer to give for removing this grave doubt of the utterly trivial nature of the whole empiric position ? Is not the world behaving like a person under the sinister and befogging influence of some pernicious drug, that has robbed it of its senses, by choosing a false psychology ?

It is impossible to rid the mind and body of their limitations super-imposed by a higher power on the higher cognition of the soul, by the multiplication of empiric falsehoods. This ought to be admitted without reservation before one acknowledges the duty of following the purely spiritual course insisted upon by Sree Chaitanya.

Knowledge of the soul is categorically different from empiric knowledge. It is not given to the conditioned soul to receive spiritual

experience until he is relieved of his aggressive mental functioning.

Conditioned experience is both misleading and piecemeal. Spiritual experience gives a clear realisation of the whole position in and through every particle of its specific manifestation. The entities themselves disclose their relationship to the awakened soul in and by their spiritual service to God. There is no dark corner on the spiritual horizon. No perilous voyages of discovery need be undertaken to find any unknown worlds. The whole sphere is lighted up. Even the least particle of the spiritual function dispells all fears of the greatest magnitude.

There is another distinguishing characteristic. The knowledge of the soul is one with her identity and with her function towards other entities. Empiric knowledge of any entity is different from the object of such knowledge and from the activities of such knower towards such object. The empiricist in fact knows nothing about an entity, and his total ignorance of it effectively frustrates all his activities towards such entity. The empiric idea of an entity has its seeming

temporary existence only in the brain of its so-called knower. Empiric entities exist utterly disconnected from one another and bundled together by the balancing of forces acting mechanically on them from different points of the compass. The fact of physical contact between such entities does not establish any relationship of affinity between them. Mental contact or overlapping also is ineffectual for this purpose. In the empiric scheme the physical atoms and molecules remain unextended and wholly apart from one another as entities. Their reactions towards one another are also effected through forces that partake of the nature of their dead inflexibility devoid of the conscious faculty of rational choice and incorporation with one another.

It is the desire of the soul to seek for union of intimate affinity with every kindred entity by means of concrete, associated, unreserved effort towards a common, realisable, tangible objective. These relevant considerations are found to be inapplicable to any conceivable position that may be reached by mental speculation. The pragmatist, on being satisfied of the impracticability of

consistent speculative thinking in regard to the soul, strives to live as best he may, on the changing insufficiency of his available resources.

This despairing creed bakes no bread. The quest of the soul cannot be shelved without disarranging everything. There must also be a practical path for self-realisation. Self-knowledge is also to be attained by a method that is really in keeping with the purpose of its complete requirement. Confusing, piecemeal knowledge imbibed by the piecemeal method will not lead to this result. The subject of transcendental epistemology is co-extensive with God and can be approached only through the necessary preliminary knowledge regarding the Entity of God Himself.

The personality of God is not to be confused with the corresponding empiric conception of it. Personality is, however, always realisable on the value-giving principle of existence. If personality is eliminated, only dust and ashes are left as residue.

But mundane personality is also realisable as the root-cause of all the difficulties of the worldly life. If, therefore, this conception is

mechanically carried to the other sphere, the position is made worse. By committing this anomaly the empiricist affects to gauge the form or concrete activity or purpose of the Absolute. The mundane notion of personality is a limiting entity. The mundane person is cut off by his personality from the entities of other persons and from the extensive sphere of the non-personal. To efface one's personality for the general purpose is one of the platitudes of mundane democratic and philanthropic ambitions. 'The personal equation' is supposed by the materialists to stand in the way of the quest of the Truth, and even of ordinary good breeding. These are the recognised difficulties of the mundane conception of personality.

If God is a person, how can He also not be separated from every other person and all nonpersonal entities ? That which is capable of asserting its individuality can only do so by opposing or incorporating those of other entities to the same extent. If one personality is incorporated into another, one's individuality is diminished to the extent to which he submits to such incorporation in the line of another's

personality. God cannot be supposed to be liable to subordinated incorporation into other entities. The only way in which the individuality of both could be safe-guarded, if it could then be said to exist at all, is one of unreserved admission of the identity of God with all other entities. This world destroys the principle of plurality of individuals by merging everything into the one personality of God. But if there were only one original person and everything else an incorporated non-entity, there would be no question of more than one personality ; and all other supposed personalities would have to remain inert and non-existent. This is also the conscious or unconscious, unavoidable conclusion of all speculative schools of metaphysics on the subject of the personality of God.

But it is certainly a much more logical view to suppose that the Absolute really stands to us in most intimate personal relationship. The view is also one that accords fully with the more important requirements of our nature. We are persons. We should naturally desire to contract personal relationship. This is not possible unless there is a plurality of persons to associate

with. If there is a clash of interests, as is inevitable among persons of an independent will and different tastes and out-look, there can be no personal association without unending mutual strife. Mundane personality is a dominating principle. It loses its nature when it allows itself to be dominated even by a superior mundane personality. The democratic programme seeks to obtain equal security of rights for every individual; it also tries to prevent the exploitation of one person by another for the gratification of the latter's unappeaseable passion of domination. May it, however, be called to be a counsel of femininity? It tends to suppress the masculine principle of initiative and execution. There is nothing that is more repugnant to human nature than for a person to agree to submit to the domination of another person, in direct or indirect form.

If the conception of mundane personality is merely eliminated, the non-sentient or material principle alone is left as the residual entity of empiric thought. It is this on which the empiric philosopher is compelled to fasten under the

circumstances in order to avoid the vicious circle. Imperialism is postulated to eliminate all contentious pluralism ; so also indistinguishableness is proposed to ensure the necessary unity of truth. These conclusions are, however, not solutions, but proposals to suppress the very entity of truth under cover of pretence of barren, consistent thinking.

Thus the nature of the Absolute Personality remains wholly open to speculations. Materialists, who consistently deny the ultimate nature of personality, do so when convinced of the impossibility of retaining the idea in any really acceptable form.

Sree Chaitanya tells us that spiritual personality is the fundamental, ultimate and all-conclusive principle. It is simultaneously both unitary and dual by nature. This is what is expressed by the conception of the Divine Couple. Sree Krishna represents the Predominating Moiety of the Absolute. He is the Masculine Principle. Sree Rādhā is the Predominated Moiety ; the Feminine Principle. Sree Chaitanya represents the United Divine Personality. He is Sree Krishna blended with the personality

of Sree Rādhā. Duality is not eliminated, but indissolubly combined in the One.

Personality is divided into male and female. The Male is the One. The female is joined with the Male, as power with the possessor of power. But the female is distinguishable from the Male. She cannot exist independently of the Male. And the fact that there is only One Male secures the unity of the conception.

The name Krishna is declared to be identical with the Divine Person. The sound 'Aom' is the seed of the foliated word 'Krishna'. This recalls, in a most startling manner, the teaching of the New Testament 'In the beginning was the Word'. But the Word is not the idea but the Entity of the Absolute. Sree Chaitanya did not seek to revive the old quarrel between nominalists and idealists. His teaching is far more simple and potent. He says that every transcendental entity has its specific name. This name is of the nature of the 'Word' or 'Sound.' The transcendental Sound is, however, a living entity. It is identical with the entity of the object denoted and connoted by it. The name 'Krishna' is identical with the Absolute.

The name Krishna is the transcendental 'word'. The transcendental name Krishna is not any mundane word. It is possible for every person to approach the word "Krishna" for the reason that He is pleased to manifest His appearance in this world, in a really audible form, on the lips of the *sādhū*.

It is, therefore, possible to know Krishna by serving the Word with the ear and tongue. The Word is not audible, as He is, to the physical ear. He seems to be so audible. This appearance of being audible to the ear of flesh is necessary to enable the conditioned soul to approach Him in a tangible form with his present aural faculty. But unless he surrenders himself to the unconditional guidance of the *sādhū* on whose lips the Word manifests His appearance, and unless the *sādhū* is pleased to accept his submission, his spiritual ear remains sealed to the transcendental Word and his spiritual lips are also not eligible for the utterance of the Name.

It is apparently a very simple and unobjectionable proposal. But it really involves a most careful and thorough going resurvey of the whole field of our previous thought regarding the

Absolute. It also explains why unconditional submission to the Word is not effective in the form of unconditional submission to His agent.

The Word possesses the power of revealing His Divine nature to the soul who agrees to serve Him by the methods of submissive hearing and chanting, under the unconditional guidance of His agent. The *sādhū* is the key to the whole situation. The transcendental personality of the *sādhū* cannot, however, be also approached by the conditioned soul except by the causeless mercy of the *sādhū*. Frequently the possibility arises of a bogus *sādhū* being mistaken for the spiritual agent, and *vice-versa*, whenever the conditioned soul attempts to find the *sādhū*, hampered by his own deluding, perverted cognition. It is necessary for the conditioned soul to permit the *sādhū* himself to take the initiative in making himself known. Such patient waiting is possible and open to all. Hasty submission to a bogus *sādhū* is the very worst of all spiritual difficulties. The difficulties, that are brought on by submission to the false *sādhū*, are almost insurmountable. 'One must be with caution bold'—should be the motto of those

who are in quest of the genuine agent of the Absolute. The regard that is shown to the agent is also necessary and consciously offered to the Principal.

The Word is, however, the only instrument the *sādhū* possesses, making the conditioned soul eligible for service of the Word. The Word takes the initiative in making Himself known. Until then the conditioned soul can have no idea of the spiritual personality. It is, of course, possible to describe the divine personality in mundane language. The Scriptures of the Hindus abound in such descriptions. They are symbolical of the Reality. But the actual acquaintance with the Reality may be established, not by the symbol, but by the Word Himself.

From this conception of the Word or Name of Krishna, Sree Chaitanya passes on to the consideration of the powers of the Word. The word *Shakti* is usually rendered as 'potency' or 'power'. The Absolute is realised as possessing cognising, energising and manifesting potencies. *Shakti* or potency is distinguished from *Vastu* or 'substance.' In other words the substantive entity is not neuter. He is the possessor or

wielder of *Shakti*. His *Shakti* also displays propagating, informing and gladdening functions. There are three specific manifestations of the entity of *Shakti* as (i) proper or Inner *Shakti*, (ii) external *Shakti*, and (iii) marginal *Shakti*. *Vastu* or 'substance' is not subject to any modification of entity. *Shakti* is subject to endless transformation and evolution by the boundless, unceasing activity of the will of her Possessor or *Vastu*. The doctrine of *Shakti* implies that the 'substance' is indivisible, ever-active, all-powerful conscious 'Will'. The principle of absolute will-consciousness is termed as *Vastu* or 'Possessor of *Shakti*.'

Shakti is not independent of *Vastu*. But *Shakti* has nevertheless an entitative existence of her own which is subordinated and co-related to the entity of the *Vastu*. *Shakti* is also *chetan* or possessed of a conscious will of her own that is capable of responding to the will of *Vastu*, and is wholly subservient to the latter.

Vastu is one, but Integer. He is also the Supreme Person. By sexological reference He is male ; *Sakti* is female.

The Supreme Personality displays an infinity of specifications of Form and Functions. But they are all identical with the One by their indivisible, absolute substantive nature.

Shakti is liable to split into fragments and particles. This gives rise to the plurality of individuals as products of the operation of *Shakti*. These infinitesimal individuals may be opposed to and be also entirely dissociated from the primordial potency by the will of the Supreme Person. The endless transformation of the *Shakti* of the Supreme Person and the reality of her entitative existence in her fundamental and productive aspects constitute the dynamics of phenomenal and transcendental existences.

Sree Chaitanya then discusses the evolution of power. The phenomenal world is a product of *Shakti*. It is, however, a by-product. The real movement of power is duly displayed in the transcendental sphere. The phenomenal world is a reflected projection of transcendental energy into mind and gross matter. This reflected activity is categorically different from the original activity of the *Shakti*. It is so different

that empiricists, who have tried to ascertain its nature by means of concerted thinking, have invariably declared it to be illusory. The human intellect is unable to free itself from its obstrusive domination, by its own resources. This discovery has led to the postulation of the view, ordinarily held by the empiric scientists, that it is unnecessary and useless to try to fathom the mystery of phenomenal existence, and that wise men should make the best of their present opportunities as they are. This is particularly the pragmatist's view regarding the proper function of humanity. It is the view that probably exercises the most decisive influence on the workers and thinkers of the world at the present day. The modern mind is not prepared to bother about any objections that may be offered by the severity of logical thought against any cause that promises to yield coveted material results. The attitude amounts to nothing less than the definite abandonment of the counsel of the perfection in the ideal of human conduct, and is, therefore, profoundly pessimistic. Its adoption is due to the reality of a mixed variety of temporary material results

of a questionable character that have been achieved by its means.

The real reason why empiric thought is attracted to seek for the solution of the difficulties of human life by the acquisition of control over the evolution of material energy, is that our present ego habitually thinks in terms of the requirements of our body and mind. Our body and mind are instruments of those activities by means of which we are indissolubly linked to this material existence. The body and mind are the changing products of material evolution. The control, which we suppose we are capable of acquiring through them over the working of phenomenal Nature, is only an included aspect of the working of material energy. Our body and mind are always in the power of material energy. What we are entitled to achieve is more thorough-going domination of ourselves, by our consent, by the laws of material creation, and the conscious abandonment of all initiative in our activities. Man may reduce himself to the condition of a lifeless mechanical contrivance for being driven about by every gust of material energy. By following

this method we cannot legitimately hope to be placed higher than the animal creation and stocks and stones. The activities of our body and mind point to complete absorption into the process of phenomenal Nature, as their inevitable consummation. It is towards this objective that all human institutions are being rapidly drifted by empiric thought which now dominates our hearth and altar.

The body and mind seek to dominate over the working of phenomenal Nature both in its collective and particular aspects. They also exhibit the contrary tendency of being repelled by the prospect of any affinity with the lifeless, irresponsible and disruptive march of mental and physical evolution. But neither method offers any permanent standing-ground nor full scope for the exercise of our faculties.

It is, therefore, not irrational to pause and put the straight question to ourselves, 'Whither are we really drifting?' Are we going forward, standing still or merely falling back? The worldly optimist, panting for material prospective, vehemently urges us to go on at our present tremendous pace. But the very bearings of

society are threatening to give way under the severe strain of the wreck's progress. It resembles the driving of a rickety cart over extremely uneven ground at break-neck speed in the direction of a yawning chasm. The character and prospects of such a journey are not altered by labelling it 'progressive evolution.'

Nevertheless, the contention of the evolutionists is not without value as a protest against the view that worldly activity is illusory and harmful. Active, conscious reciprocal individual existence is the only condition that can fully satisfy our rational nature. For this purpose a more suitable environment, faculties and objectives are necessary. The spiritual ego is not to be transformed. But he is to drop his alien trappings and along with them his worldly environment and objective which go with those trappings. He is to regain his natural position and his normal activities.

He is a reciprocal individual functioning in an environment that provides him with the very conditions of his active existence. This is the fact here and the condition need not be supposed to be reversed on the plane of trans-

cendence. The individual soul is a power within power. She shares the nature of a higher supporting power. Her activities tend to fall naturally into line with the working of the higher cosmic process. The realisation of the desirability of such correspondence prompts man to seek to function freely on his own initiative.

The idea of evolution is applicable to the movement of life on the transcendental plane, with necessary allowance for a difference of conditions. There is no defect to be made good on the higher plane. The will of Divinity is All-active and is constantly and unceasingly urging power into creative activities for His Gratification. This process results in an ever-expanding enjoyment of the Absolute. The reciprocal activity of the individual soul is part and parcel of this movement. No satiation-point is reached in such activity on account of the perfect serving mood ; the irresistible and ever-fresh charm displayed by the unceasing activity of the higher power under the Dominating Will of the Absolute. The natural function possesses the quality of being the end in itself. It longs for continuous

communion with the Absolute, being perpetually and increasingly spurred on to His service by the compelling charm of the Supreme Personality.

The serving activity of the unconditioned soul possesses a quality of delight that is maintained and augmented by being rendered to the only Real Master, Who is alone competent to exercise unlimited autocratic domination over every entity. By means of such perennial submission the individual soul is not only saved from the unnatural tyranny of her own pettiness, but is provided with the only congenial positive function of her higher nature.

Evolution is meaningless if it brings us no nearer the Truth, by its endless gropings in the Void. As long as we believe we are approaching the Truth, our soul is reconciled to activities for the realisation of this end. Empiric science dangles before our disloyal imagination the promise of abnormal domination over other entities. But we cannot escape full responsibility for our misfortunes if we agree to accept the same as the *summum bonum*. The little can never become the great. The little is not really despicable unless it chooses to despise itself. The

little has a distinctive and honourable place and function in the economy of the Absolute, which also can alone be fully acceptable to itself. It is only if the total scheme is defective that the members of such system are necessarily subjected to mutual mechanical exploitation, and in consequence the centrifugal force always tends to prevail over the centripetal. In the Absolute the centrifugal does not destroy, nor disrupt. It only serves to bring out the full excellence of the charm of the centripetal energy. This real distinction between the Absolute and the mundane settles the distinctive nature of the courses of evolution of either system.

The quality of the energy is not the same in the two cases. Mundane energy is inferior and subordinate, and acts as an unwholesome foil to the other. Mundane evolution offers only a deceptive promise of felicity and progress. It is really reactionary. It is not possible to form any idea of the actual working of the process of transcendental evolution, from our defective knowledge of the performances of the really chaotic and retrograde, through that march of events on the mundane plane which seems to be cosmic

and progressive. But it is nevertheless our principal duty to seek to realise the actual nature of the real methodic process and to be incorporated in the same.

Sree Chaitanya next explains the mundane sojourn. The relationship between the real process of evolution and its perverted shadowy mundane reflex—apparently incompatible—must be properly grasped, if we are to achieve the right attitude towards the problem of our present existence. This world should not be taken as being complete in itself. It can be explained only by reference to the Absolute.

The Absolute is One and Unchangeable. But the Absolute is not void of activity. The monistic idea of the Absolute makes it static and lifeless in order to make it One and Unchangeable. The Unity of the Absolute is not disputed but fully admitted only if He is conceived as the Possessor of all-energy. Energy is not a created entity. Energy is part and parcel of the Absolute and co-eternal with the Absolute. In the Absolute the Will is always active. The activity of the Absolute Will is eternally self-manifestive in the form of energy. Divine energy is in the Will

and identical with Him, and does not exist independently of or externally to the Divine Will. At the same time energy has its own specific subjective entity. It is this latter fact that is overlooked by those who disown plurality of manifestation to the entity of Energy. Manifestation and plurality go hand to hand. If we attempt to conceive manifestation minus movement and dimensions we thereby deny the reality of manifestation. As manifestation is a real movement and a transformation of energy and does not involve the change of the entity of the Will, the view that energy is unchangeable is misleading, self-contradictory and opposed to all experience.

The transformation of energy need not necessarily produce clogs and limitations, although it actually happens to be so in this world. Energy should produce unbroken infinity of dimensions and ever-present time in order to be a proper vehicle for the manifestation of the Absolute Will. The Realm of God produced by the operation of the energy of the Divine Will is the only real creation even to the logical faculty of the conditioned state.

But why is the actual world, that is familiar to all of us, apparently so different from this legitimate logical expectation? Why also is it impossible for us to conceive of any existence of higher than three dimensions? If this limitation be wholly incompatible with and altogether foreign to the working of an absolute Will, how is its existence found to be the only thing that is both familiar and also seemingly conceivable to the human cognition?

Looked at from the point of view of the Absolute, the problem of the mundane sojourn should at once disclose this essentially self-contradictory character. Is it, therefore, an illusion? But even an illusion should have its cause, and also its cure. Can the Absolute be logically held responsible for the production of an entity foreign and opposed to itself? Yes, this should be, nay must be, both possible and inevitable by the unfettered operations of the energy of the Absolute Will.

There should be no limit to the actual transformation of energy in respect of dimension and sequence. The inconceivable should always

be possible and practicable. Otherwise limitation would be imposed upon the Absolute Will.

This at once disposes of the questions of Salvation and Elevation. A fully enlightened person should be aware of the irrational nature of all prayers for liberation and improvement. The only thing necessary is to be allowed full scope for sharing the activities of the energy of the Divine Will by conscious reciprocal individual initiative. This should be the only rationally admissible form of prayer. As soon as an individual realises that his specific services are directed by the Divine Will, he should be automatically relieved of all sense of inadequacy. As God is never bankrupt, the person who finds himself in line with the working of the Divine Will attains all his legitimate desires.

The individual soul is not a created entity. God did not create something out of nothing. Both something and nothing are equally the products of the eternal energy of the Divine Will. They are inherent in His operative Will. There can be no real outside and inside, no good or evil, in the Absolute. But outside and inside, good and evil, may nevertheless be brought into

existence on an isolated plane of their own by the free retrograde operation of divine energy. This back-water of the mighty ocean of All-existence, to use an imperfect metaphor, need neither be ignored nor also confounded with the ocean itself.

The individual soul is a particle of energy who may function in the state of reciprocating incorporation with, or in rebellious dissociation from, plenary power from whom he evolves and whose essence he shares. In his state of wilful dissociation he finds himself in opposition to the working of the Absolute Will, and is busied in devising plans for extricating himself from the domination of the Divine Will.

The responsibility of the individual for setting himself in opposition to the Divine Will and courting the consequent miseries of this mundane sojourn is not possible to establish if we allow ourselves to be obsessed by the so-called consistencies of mundane existence. The operation of the Divine Will does not touch the free initiative of energy.

It has already been postulated the distinctive entitative existence of energy. This requires to

be developed for explaining the reality of the individual's responsibility in respect of worldly sojourn.

For this purpose it is necessary to recall that *Shakti* of the *Vastu* has three specific forms of manifestation, viz. (1) as proper or inner *Shakti* (called *Chit* or *Antaranṇā Shakti*), (2) as external *Shakti* (*A-chit* or *Bahirangā Shakti*), and (3) as marginal *Shakti* (known as *Tatasthā* or *Jiva Shakti*). All these display the activity of evolution. The marginal or Jiva potency is the source of manifestation of individual souls or Jivas.

The individual soul is an infinitesimal detached particle of the marginal potency. In her nascent state the individual soul is delicately poised on the line of demarcation between the *Chit* and the *A-chit* manifestations or worlds. The soul has no standing-ground in her marginal position. She does not receive any support from her source-power for functioning on the borderland. She is projected into the realm of the external *Shakti* by her source at the moment of her manifestation.

But the individual soul need not, therefore, choose to function improperly in this world. She

undoubtedly finds herself in the presence of the external potency. But her nature is of the essence of the inner potency. She should, therefore, naturally gravitate towards the latter. For making this initial choice she does not require any extraneous guidance. She is endowed by her source with perfect freedom in this matter of making her choice between the two courses. She is, however, potentially capable of throwing in her lot with the external *Shakti*. Such choice is an abuse of her freedom as it would be exercised against her own real nature.

It may be contended that the choice is in a manner forced upon her by the greater proximity of the external power. To this the reply is that the external power has no jurisdiction over her until she freely chooses to surrender her independence. It is certainly the height of folly and perversity for the individual soul to choose to part with her independence for no reason. But nothing short of this can account for her original rebellion against the Absolute.

The soul at the moment of her first contact with the external power is fully aware of her own spiritual nature and of the availability of support

from the inner Shakti if she chooses to follow her proper nature under such guidance. She cannot stand on her own legs as a servant of God on account of her infinitesimal stature. That is also the reason why she cannot avoid losing her independence unless she seeks the protecting help of the inner Shakti. This help can also be obtained only on condition that the individual soul should actually agree to function in the proper manner. There is, therefore, no valid ground of complaint for the soul who chooses wilfully to follow the suicidal course.

But after the wrong choice has been made, the offending soul cannot free herself by her own efforts from the foreseen consequences of her deliberate act of rebellion. She is now in the grip of the external punitive power. It is necessary for her to propitiate the external power by submitting to suffer with true contrition. It is also necessary to resolve to abstain from all further offensive conduct. The performance of the penitential activity is provided by the organisation of society according to *Varna* (disposition) and *Ashrama* (stage).

The *Varnāshrama* organisation provides for that mode of social living which is in a sense the exact opposite of the ordinary worldly course. The retributive view of salvationism is not, however, the only basis of such arrangement. In the unwinding process of penitential living under *Varnāshrama* regulations the world is not really renounced but becomes a means for the attainment of a positive ideal of conduct. But spiritual conduct is nevertheless not identical with morality alone, although it is probably the dimly apprehended source of it. In the absence of any real experience of spiritual living the repentant soul is compelled to seek for the solution of her difficulties within her mundane experience. The ethical outlook, which is thus generated, does not transcend the mundane experience. *Varnāshrama* organisation is not a mere moral ordering of society. It believes in transcendental experience and submits to the unconditional guidance of self-realised souls, which is super-moral.

CHAPTER VI

HISTORY OF THE CHAITANYA MOVEMENT

The history of a spiritual movement sounds a contradiction in terms. It is the teaching of Sree Chaitanya that no one can hardly recognise a Vaishnava (devotee of Vishnu), as he really is. The personality of a Vaishnava is transcendental. His activities are, therefore, the same. It is necessary to remember this important fact, lest we allow ourselves to be obsessed by an avoidable initial prejudice.

The word 'Vaishnava' means servant of Vishnu or the All-pervading Transcendental Personality of the Absolute. Vishnu is served by the spiritual essences of all entities. The mundane cannot abide in the presence of Vishnu. The mundane potency of Vishnu also serves her Lord, but only in a negative way. Persons who allow their spiritual nature to fall under the alien control of the mundane potency, called *Maya*, thereby forfeit their eligibility for the spiritual service of Vishnu. They are doomed

to grope in utter darkness in consequence of such mischoice.

Modern History may be said to have come into existence in the Eighteenth Century of the Christian Era, though academically some hold that it came into existence in the Renaissance period, from 1501. However, the Eighteenth Century is par excellence the Century of aggressive scepticism. The sceptics of that period found it congenial to disbelieve the spiritual character of the activities of pure souls by relying on the testimony of History against all claims to transcendence. These sceptics justified themselves by denying the possibility of miracles. These sceptics could of course be justified as regards miracles that were merely mundane. But transcendence was supposed to consist in the power to violate the cosmic law with impunity. Cosmic law, however, was not made to be violated for the purpose of establishing, by such a crude procedure, the superiority of the spiritual over the mundane.

The pure devotee of Vishnu makes his appearance in this world without putting on the vesture of flesh and without becoming subject to

the laws of this world in the limiting sense. This does not mean that the Vaishnavas appear in the likeness of strange entities. On the contrary they remain absolutely indistinguishable from ordinary mortals to the view of worldly people. This is the real meaning of transcendence. A transcendental entity is located beyond the reach of the faculties of the fallen. Such an entity never gives any cause for suspicion that he is really transcendental.

It is of course possible to write the history of a spiritual movement as it appears to the view of worldly people. But should such a history be considered as the true account of such a Movement? Neither is it necessary to disbelieve the statements of reliable contemporaries who happened to be quite conversant with the real nature of the Movement which they undertook to describe. It is, however, necessary to distinguish between observation and opinion in dealing with such a Movement.

Chapter Five of "The Chaitanya Movement" written by Mr. M. T. Kennedy offers a brief history of the Sect after the prevalent manner of Modern History. That account is based on

evidence of a number of literary works supplemented by first hand experience of the current professed followers of Sree Chaitanya. The author of the "Chaitanya Movement" has relied upon his own judgment in his attempt to understand the real meaning of the spiritual narratives handed down in the works of genuine Vaishnava writers. He has in consequence picked up a wholly misguided view of the *actual* teaching and history of Sree Chaitanya and the Movement. His narrative is for this reason unacceptable to those who are prepared to adopt a really proper attitude towards a spiritual subject. This untoward result has not been due to any dishonesty of purpose on his part, but to the faulty character of his method.

The teaching of Sree Chaitanya proved unintelligible to most of the subtle intellectuals of Nabadwipa, the emporium, of abstruse Sanskrit studies of that day. Those scholars were perplexed by what actually appeared to them to be unwarrantable and almost outrageous claims to spirituality on the part of Sree Chaitanya and his associates. Even those who are in a position to admit the possibility of the appearance of the

transcendent on the mundane plane, as those scholars of his time versed in the Scriptures of India should have been certainly prepared to do, are liable to misunderstand the nature of spiritual events when they actually appear in this world.

It needs must also be so. It is not at all possible for any worldly person to understand fully the true meaning of a transcendental narrative. Sree Chaitanya says that to serve God is the right of all souls. This is attainable if one is inclined to serve God, and not to dominate over other entities. There are few persons who are prepared to approach the pure devotee for the purpose of accepting the unconditional service of God at the hands of His servant. This duty of unconditional submission to God as represented by His agent seldom appeals to the perverted judgment of the people of this world. They are apt to succumb to the vanity of relying on their defective conclusions regarding the nature of God, reached by the misleading resources of the conditioned state.

Mundane historicity is sure of its ability to understand and convey the tidings of God. So long as mundane historicity is bent upon the

performance of a task for which it is really unfit, it should be liable to the charge of 'deliberately blocking the path of real enlightenment by its disingenuous manoeuvres for parading its own talents instead of offering its unconditional services to the Truth. The moment such a historian is prepared to entertain a sincere desire for enlightenment about the real nature of spiritual occurrences to which he has no access, he is enabled to follow the significance of the living words of the servant of God due to the subsidence of his opposing mentality.

With so much of change in every branch of life in India today, it is essential that the great Universities should be prepared to be addressed in the language that is intended for the ready acceptance of all pure souls. But who cares for the Truth and the right direction? The world is madly running down the steps of utter materialism, being misguided by the false vanities of worldly attainments. The pure souls are, however, absolutely free from all taste for an elected perpetual thralldom to the limited and meaningless dictates of our clouded cognition. Should we once stop and think clearly and realise that

human cognition as playing its part today is really directed to the suicidal task of extending and consolidating its illusory domination over animate and inanimate Nature? What does it avail the soul if she is exalted to a false and purposeless sovereignty over entities that are doomed to be less exalted than herself? If the prudent Universities of the Modern Age are disinclined to rise to the requirements of spiritual living by fearlessly accepting all that it implies, they will thereby afford a just ground for the complaint that modern Science is prepared to be false to itself.

This phenomenal world is by no means a falsehood. Its standing problems appear to be almost insoluble. The scientific men of the twentieth century have become sadder than their predecessors after their recent terrible experience of the not unexpected cataclysm in the affairs of man. The promises of Science were found wanting when weighed in the balance of the immediate requirements of the present. The question that imperatively demands an answer is, "what are we to do at this moment?" Science has become cautious and advises a

waiting policy. It is no longer eager to hazard any promises of relief of the present ailment. Man has been found to be able to spoil all contrivances of human Science for effecting his present well-being. The present european situation is a vivid picture of the misuse of Science which is engaged in the slaughter of the soldiers and the civilians alike. This might set humanity to think once again carefully about the real path to eternal peace.

History offers the record of the events of the past professedly with a view to enable us to understand the present. It takes for granted the fact that we can understand the present with the help of the past. If the antecedents of an event are known, the event is taken to be understood. But why are we to suppose that the past does not deceive as much as the present ?

Those who have any real inclination for the service of God may realise His service by submitting to adjusting their method of quest to the requirements of the case. Those who are not inclined for such a course of life may yet listen to the message of God for the sake of satisfying

an idle curiosity or for opposing the Truth for the unscientific reason that they themselves are unable to understand Him without submitting to the necessary adjustment in method.

Mr. M. T. Kennedy does not trouble himself about such difficulties. The history of the Chaitanya Movement which he got up by his method suffers from this fatal incompetence. It becomes the history of mundane affairs, which also it is probably intended to be ; thereby he has not done justice to the Movement.

With these preliminary observations one might proceed on to trace the history of the Chaitanya Movement. Sree Chaitanya appeared in this world on February 18, in the year 1486 of the Christian Era. He disappeared in 1534 at the age of 48. He spent the first 24 years of his career at Sree Māyāpore in Nabadwipa in the home of his parents. He began to preach the religion publicly from his sixteenth year. He renounced the world at the age of 24 when he left Nabadwipa for good. As a sannyāsin (monk) he spent six years in travelling to all parts of India on a pilgrimage to the holy temples, shrines and localities sanctified by the activities

of the Appearances of the Divinity and His devotees. In his thirtieth year he settled down at Puri in Orissa, but continued his public discourses for another six years. During the concluding twelve years of his career Sree Chaitanya shut himself up in the seclusion of his Sanctum at Puri, to which only two of his followers were allowed access. These two favoured persons were Swarupa Dāmodara and Rai Rāmānanda.

Sree Chaitanya sent Rupa and Sanātana to Vrindābana to revive the worship of Sree Rādhā-Krishna. He also commissioned Nityānanda to preach the religion of Divine Love to the Feet of Sree Rādhā-Krishna in all parts of Bengal.

There were thus three distinct centres of propaganda at the time of Sree Chaitanya, viz. Puri, Vrindābana and Nabadwipa.

Sree Chaitanya himself did not make any disciples. His numerous associates initiated a great number of persons in the service of Sree Rādhā-Krishna. In *Chaitanya-Charitāmṛita* and *Gaurganoddeshadipikā*, we find the first list of the principal lines of disciplic succession issuing from the associates of Sree Chaitanya.

Sree Rupa was taught the principles of varieties of loving service by Sree Chaitanya and was given the power to propagate the same from Vrindābana. Rupa's elder brother Sanātana was similarly instructed by Sree Chaitanya in the nature of God and His powers. The distinctive teaching of Sree Chaitanya is to be found in its authorised form in the writings of Sanātana and Rupa, in its highest form in the works of Rupa. Sanātana wrote with a view to incorporate all previous dispensations in the teaching of Sree Chaitanya by establishing Sree Krishna as the All-comprehending, Complete Divine Personality, or God as He is in Himself. Gopāla Bhatta is the ritualistic, and Jiva-Goswāmi the philosophical, exponent of the function of the soul in her unconditioned state. Rupa tells the world how Sree Rādhā-Krishna is served on the highest plane. Rupa gives us the positive function in its entirety. Sanātana and Jiva-Goswāmi elucidated the preliminaries. Raghunātha Dās is the exponent of the Final Goal of Loving Devotion.

Swarupa Dāmodara and Rai Rāmananda were in personal attendance on Sree Chaitanya

during the long residence at Puri. The memoirs of Swarupa Dāmodara were used by Kavirāja Goswāmi, the author of the *Chaitanya-Charitāmṛita*, which gives the detailed account of the career of Sree Chaitanya as a *sannyāsi* or itinerant preaching monk. Raghunātha Dās throughout the greater part of this period was in personal attendance on Swarupa Dāmodara. Rāi Rāmānanda figures as the beloved associate of Sree Chaitanya himself in the religion of loving devotion.

Gadādhara Pundit, the most intimate associate of Sree Chaitanya, is also not so much connected with the propaganda activity. Thākura Haridās was the preacher of the Name till he took up his residence at Puri in the company of Sree Chaitanya. He, however, continued to chant the Name night and day in his solitary hut at Puri.

Nityānanda was the typical propagator of the religion at this period by command of Sree Chaitanya himself. The Vrindābana-Goswāmins propagated the Faith through their writings, discourses and personal example. All of them devoted themselves exclusively to the service of

God by leading the life of absolute poverty and complete detachment from the world. Nityānanda on the contrary led the life of an all-merciful proselytising missionary. He acted habitually in open violation of all the ceremonial conventions of the orthodox Hindu society on some occasions. On being commissioned by Sree Chaitanya, not merely to preach, but, to bestow the gift of loving devotion indiscriminately on all persons in the country of Bengal, Nityānanda began his missionary activities by accepting in marriage his two consorts. There was a child, Birabhadra Prabhu, of one of these consorts. Nityānanda went among the people most richly attired, wearing a profusion of golden ornaments and jewels all over his body in the company of gay friends. Like Sree Chaitanya Nityānanda did not write any book on the religion which he propagated by the mere force of his divine magnetic personality and speeches. But Nityānanda bestowed the power of recording the events of Sree Chaitanya's career on Thākur Vrindābana Dās, the author of *Sree Chaitanya Bhāgavata*, which contains the detailed account of the doings

of Sree Chaitanya up to his acceptance of renunciation.

Advaitāchārya was another of the principal associates of Sree Chaitanya. His pure worship of Vishnu and passionate invocations were the cause of the advent of Sree Chaitanya. The ways of Advaitāchārya were also difficult to understand as those of Nityānanda. He led the life of a Brāhmana house-holder of the orthodox type with notable characteristic deviations from the current standard of Brāhmanic conduct.

Kavirāja Goswāmi, author of *Sree Chaitanya-Charitāmrita*, lays down the canon that the career of Sree Chaitanya cannot be understood except in terms of the aggregate of the careers of his associates. Failure to observe the above piece of advice has been responsible for the subsequent propagation of schismatic opinions within the community. But 'as the spiritual Movement or Community is a transcendental entity and as such incapable of being affected by the dirt of perverse speculations and corrupt institutions propagated by the vanity of worldly people in the name of religion, it is only individuals, who have no real taste for the

unconditional service of the Living Truth, who are liable to welcome disruptive controversies that can have no real bearing on the spiritual issue.

The associates of Sree Chaitanya by no means led a uniform type of life. On the contrary every one of them displayed a specific mode of living of his own. External conformity to the stereotyped model is foreign to the conception of absolutely free service of Divinity by the method of spontaneous devotion on the highest plane of transcendence taught and practised by Sree Chaitanya and his associates.

As a matter of fact the associates of Sree Chaitanya are divided into five distinctive categories. They are a part of Sree Chaitanya and yet distinct from him as well as from one another. The associates of Sree Chaitanya are not conditioned souls. They are the eternal denizens of the realm of God. The history of the Movement at the time of Sree Chaitanya is the history of his doings in the company of his associates. None of the actors of his doings belonged to the mundane plane. There could be no real discord in their spiritual Community.

Those, therefore, who are anxious to trace the rise of the schismatic opinions to the associates of Sree Chaitanya should thank only themselves if they fail to recognise the perfection of diversified harmony in the spiritual Community.

There are spiritual facts as there are mundane facts. No one thinks it worth while to quarrel about the validity of any mundane fact. If anybody's conclusion is contradicted by any mundane fact, such conclusion is adjusted to the defective as a matter of course. No other proof is necessary for establishing the defective nature of such conclusion. But this consideration is seldom extended by the critical school to spiritual facts. On the contrary it is spiritual facts that are required to conform to the conclusions of mundane reasoning. If the conclusion of mundane reasoning is found to be opposed to the testimony of spiritual facts, the latter are considered to be defective. Such illogical muddling cannot but lead to misunderstanding and the elaboration of the futile speculations. It is not necessary to abstain from challenging the validity of a spiritual fact than from denying the very existence of a mundane fact as fact. It is

certainly the only useful course to try to extend one's experience of both varieties.

Spiritual occurrences explain themselves. But they do so only to those who really want to be enlightened. Spiritual events are eternal. The doings of Sree Chaitanya and his associates are not events of the dead past. They are present everywhere and in all time. Four centuries ago they made themselves visible to the people of India in the likeness of mundane occurrences. Most persons at that time also thought they were not at all different from really mundane occurrences. The majority of the Pundits of Nabadwipa refused to recognise them as spiritual. Sree Chaitanya and his associates, however, proclaimed to all persons, not the Divinity of himself and his associates, but the necessity of following the teachings of the Scriptures for the purpose of attaining to the plane of the spiritual service of Sree Rādhā-Krishna which is the only function of all pure souls. But the bearing of his teaching on his activities was not at first perceived by those sophisticated scholars.

Sree Chaitanya was also the greatest scholar of Nabadwipa. No Pundit dared to confront

him for the purpose of attempting to expose his fallacy. Neither did any one at once agree to be converted to his irrefutable views. Those few Pundits who were so converted were the exceptions. Conversions were wrought much more quickly among the masses. This also at first added to the cause of the distrust among the learned.

The reason of this is that learning was supposed by the Pundits of Nabadwipa to be identical with the realisation of the spiritual life, at any rate to a certain extent. They were inordinately vain of their erudition and knowledge of the Scriptures. Sree Chaitanya told them to chant the Name of Krishna aloud, freeing themselves from all offences against the Name, if they really wanted to find eternal life. Until the veil of worldly ignorance is lifted by the causeless grace of God, it is impossible even for the greatest scholar really to understand even the most elementary facts of spiritual living. Learning does not quench mundane thirst. One requires to be supplied with the substance, known as water, and also to drink the same, to appease one's thirst. So also the most erudite speculation

about the soul and God is not identical with the actual realisation of one's self and one's spiritual relationship with God. For this practical end it is necessary to be able to live the spiritual life in the concrete realm of the soul. The Pundits of Nabadwipa were satisfied with their fictitious speculations about spiritual life plus their actual worldly living. One needs the honesty of judgment that is prepared to distinguish between the two.

Nityānanda had the power to bestow the gift of spiritual enlightenment on all persons. The possession of such power by God may appear to be unfair to our mortal judgment. We may be impelled to ask the questions, "Is human endeavour then of no value for obtaining spiritual enlightenment? Are not good works and knowledge at least better than immorality and ignorance and ought they not to lead to spiritual enlightenment without the necessity of God's grace?" Such objection is not really valid. Good works and knowledge are entities of this mundane plane. Good works and knowledge would be valuable if it could be made easier by this means to realise the futility of mundane

activity for purposes of the soul. But not all good works, nor every form of knowledge are a help towards such disillusionment. On the contrary good works lead to knowledge and knowledge tends to lead to the formless void. It is necessary to seek for real enlightenment by the proper method. It is certainly necessary to seek the active help of experienced guides for understanding why and what species of goodwork and knowledge can help the spiritual purpose. One who is utterly ignorant of the conditions of the spiritual living can have no faculty by which he may guide himself or another person. In the affairs of the mundane world one habitually relies on the help of expert help at every step. Why should it not be equally necessary to depend on expert help at every step in a matter which is located wholly beyond the range of our present perverted faculties? The Scriptures declare that it is necessary to submit to the absolute guidance of the spiritual expert to learn to walk in the path of spiritual service which always explains itself as soon as we offer it, under such guidance, the fully receptive aptitude of our cognitive faculty.

Spiritual experience alone can create the real taste for spiritual living. No mundane experience can be expected to produce any real yearning for spiritual enlightenment. Mundane experience cannot even impress upon its victim the triviality and worthlessness of the mundane prospect. It may breed only pessimism and lethargy but nothing healthy. Still less can it lead one to the positive spiritual plane.

It is spiritual power alone that can admit us to the spiritual plane. Nityānanda was the possessor of this power. It is this great spiritual fact which is expressed in the non-conventional and self-sufficient behaviour of Nityānanda. Advāitachārya understood the real significance of the unrestricted devotional activities of Nityānanda. He nevertheless chose to be seemingly opposed to the method of Nityānanda. Advaita's attitude represents the opposition of sterile intellectualism to the principle of substantive existence, and also its ultimate preference for a void. Nityānanda's conduct represents freedom from limitations; it also represents all true existence, knowledge and bliss. Nityānanda is full of uncontrolled,

infinite, rational, blissful, boisterous energy. His conduct exhibits the perfection of spiritual purity and freedom.

Advaita was afraid lest the conduct of Nityānanda might be imitated by worldly people in furtherance of their worldly designs. It was not the purpose of Nityānanda to abolish the moral conventions of society. The purpose of the mundane cosmic order is not violated but fulfilled by the unconventional freedom of the unconditioned state. Moral regulation although really barren and negative is essentially necessary on the mundane plane for the spiritual attainment. But the very conception of worldly morality need not be carried to the plane that is absolutely free from all impurity and incapable of receiving any impurity. These considerations explain the seeming opposition of Advaita to Nityānanda.

Nityānanda manifests the teaching of Sree Chaitanya in its unambiguous completeness. The soul is free from all mundane hankering the instant she throws herself on the support of the spiritual power of God. Nityānanda could impart this submissive inclination to the condi-

tioned soul without undermining her perfect freedom of choice. This function may be described as the exercise of the causeless mercy by the Divinity towards the fallen. Without such help it is not possible for the conditioned soul to feel any real need for submission to the spiritual power of God. The conditioned soul is ready enough to submit to the thralldom of mundane power. This is the real but unavoidable paradox and tragedy of conditioned existence.

The activities of Sree Chaitanya and his associates effected the deliverance of the people through the communicating agency of those who received spiritual enlightenment by the causeless mercy of Sree Chaitanya. This process is manifested unequivocally in the seemingly inexplicable conduct of Nityānanda. The fullest measure of divine mercy was lavished on the people of Bengal. The influence of Nityānanda was very great, and his doctrine of divine love went deep into their hearts. It was the aftermath of his influence that Bengal could not shake off the perversion of that influence after the time of Nityānanda, which made the people generally turn towards a sentimental tendency.

The redemption of the people of other parts of the country was effected by more ambiguous methods. Sree Chaitanya set them an example by leading the life of a sannyāsi (monk). The conduct of the famous six Goswāmis of Vrindābana exhibits extreme renunciation. There was no need for them to lead the life of privation. For them there was, indeed, no difference between life full of luxury and one of utter destitution. Still they preferred to exhibit the latter form of conduct in order to teach the worldly people the salutary lesson that until one is really freed from all mundane hankering one is not eligible for the spiritual service of God. It was easier for the worldly people to understand that the Goswāmis were really free from mundane hankering when they actually found them able and willing to lead the life of severe renunciation. By their conduct they wanted to prevent a likely misunderstanding. That such misunderstanding was not altogether removed thereby is proved by the legends about the quarrels between Nityānanda and Advaita, and between Nityānanda and Sree Chaitanya himself, that have been sedulously preserved and

handed down by worldly people who had no other purpose but to detect supposed defects in the activities of pure souls. This falsification of history was anticipated by Thākur Vrindābana Dās.

The statement which frequently recurs in *Sree Chaitanya Charitāmrita* to the effect that all persons in every part of India were converted to spiritual life need not also be understood in any narrow worldly sense. Sree Chaitanya converted a number of Muhammadans. Chānd Kāzi, one of them, does not appear to have conformed externally to the requirements of the Vaishnava rituals. Haridās Thākur, who came of a Moslem family, became the authorised teacher and propounder of the chant of the Holy Name. He gave up all Muhammadan predilections. Several Pāthāns were converted to the spiritual life by Sree Chaitanya on his way back from Vrindābana. They were subsequently known as Pāthān Vaishnavas. They appear to have conformed to the practices of his devotees. The father and uncle of Gopāla Bhatta Goswāmi were converted by Sree Chaitanya. They were originally natives of the Telugu country, but

domiciled in the Tamil country, and had been Sree-Vaishnavas, i.e. worshippers of Laksmi and Nārāyana, by birth and heredity. They became worshippers of Rādhā-Krishna. Other instances may be multiplied to show that spiritual conversions wrought by Sree Chaitanya and his associates exhibit both diversity as well as gradations with their correspondingly distinctive external conduct.

The appearance of transcendental preachers bringing tidings of the spiritual realm influences the contemporary thought of the whole world. But there are also gradations and degrees of the extent in which it is operative in the case of individuals. The actual influence produced depends in part on the spiritual receptivity of the individual. Such receptivity is itself a product of similar spiritual influence previously experienced by the individual. The receptive aptitude is accompanied by a growing conviction of the futility of worldly life prompted by the requirements of our unalloyed spiritual nature.

It is not attempted here to go through the whole history of the Chaitanya Movement at

the time of Sree Chaitanya. Certain general characteristics of the Movement in Sree Chaitanya's own day have been laid down for the guidance of those who might be inclined to study closely the history of the Movement at the time of Sree Chaitanya himself and after him. The method of approach should be as has been explained here. I have tried to bring out the intimate connection between the inner nature of the Movement and its history and to explain the difficulties and dangers that beset a truly scientific interpretation of the priceless spiritual records of the world. It is hoped that it will be clear from the above arguments that it is not the same thing to write the history of mundane occurrences and the activities of spiritual personages.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

What was the influence of Sree Chaitanya on India and the world ? It is as well to deal with another topic which has often appeared to be a source of some perplexity to the rationalist critics of religion. If Sree Chaitanya taught the true religion, how could it fail to find general acceptance in India and all over the civilised world ? Such a question involves the assumption that the civilised people of this world are prepared to accept the God as soon as He might choose to present Himself. But as a matter of fact modern civilization is hardly prepared to confess the need for spiritual enlightenment. The people of this world have always displayed a rooted aversion to the Truth. They have ever had an abnormal hankering for domination and for the gratification of their senses. It may not be too much to say that modern science is almost committed to the congenial task of overthrowing the sovereignty of God and supplanting Him on

His Throne. The fashionable cult of pragmatism with its blunt attachment to the opportunity of enjoyment offered by the changing conditions of the moment, is the legitimate child of the adventurous disposition. Liberationism and Buddhism are not positively hopeful.

It takes a long time for the truth to capture the hearts of worldly-minded people. There is always a long germinating period even when the soil is favourable. India in the 16th century was offered the choice between three alternatives viz. its own prevailing lifeless ritualism and negative idealism, the altruistic iconoclastic monism of Islam, and the teaching of the theistic Scriptures made available in its fullest spiritual significance by the career and teaching of Sree Chaitanya.

The influence of Sree Chaitanya saved Bengal, Orissa and Assam from the onrush of Islam ; but the people of India, particularly northern India, accepted the altruistic ideal of Islam. They have been trying to do so in a more thorough-going fashion through growing contact with the civilization of Europe, since the 15th century. They even tried to assimilate the

teaching of Sree Chaitanya with the requirements of altruistic thought. The result has been the mingling of incompatible doctrines which have given rise to innumerable sects, who now in Bengal and Orissa profess to follow the teaching of Sree Chaitanya, recruited mostly from the less promising elements of society.

The real teaching of Sree Chaitanya found only individual followers whose lives and writings have exerted a profound influence on the philosophical thought of India and of the world. But this effect has been more or less unconscious. The people of India are admirers of Sree Chaitanya as the *prophet of the religion of love*. European scholars and public opinion, as far as they are at all acquainted with him, have also on the whole taken a favourable view of his personality, if not also of his teaching. But all this, notwithstanding the wide stream of *Virajā* continues to separate completely the transcendental sphere of his teaching from the range of knowing, feeling and willing of this mundane world. His teaching undoubtely shows various points of affinity with all the great religions of the world and specially the thought of the

founders of the four existing Vaishnava schools of India. But it is nevertheless very different from all other systems, and remains supremely fascinating and supremely difficult to understand.

The pastimes of Sree Krishna had been sung by a number of poets before the time of Sree Chaitanya. The poems of Jayadeva, Vidyāpati, Chandidāsa, Thākur Billamangala and a few Purānas, especially the Sreemad Bhāgavatam, had treated of the subject in a sufficiently explicit manner. But the living conduct of a devotee of Sree Krishna as exhibited to the world by the career and teaching of Sree Chaitanya was wholly unknown to the people and remains much the same to this day. His career created its own specific literature, the Gaudiya-Vaishnava literature, in the Sanskrit and Bengali languages. This literature has not yet attracted the serious attention of Indologists, and its extraordinary significance has not been properly realised, due to various reasons.

Thākur Bhaktivinode was the first writer of repute to grasp the importance of the teaching of Sree Chaitanya and he sought to present it to

the world in a series of masterly works written with the purpose of meeting the requirements of the modern mentality. A careful study of his works will undoubtedly be helpful to those who want to be acquainted with the real purport of the Gaudiya-Vaishnava literature.

Absolute Truth is a Living Spiritual Personage with initiative, externally manifesting Himself through the transformation of His power obeying His will. There is accordingly a constant influx of redeeming energy directed into the world by the perfect and full activity of the Divine Will. This overflow of redeeming energy into the mundane world constitutes the activities of pure souls, visible by their work in this world. There is an eternal chain of visible leaders of these activities and the historical records of their doings. God also directly intervenes in the affairs of this world from time to time. India possesses a vast body of records of these spiritual events and a living tradition of the succession of Saviours. Vedic literature in its true sense constitutes the record. The succession of the Achāryas (Spiritual Teachers) or transcendental servitors of the Absolute, supplies the unbroken

chain of the leaders and guides of all spiritual activities. The service of God is available by submission to his principal agents.

Just as there have been visible Saviours in the form of human beings at all periods, in the same way the servitors of God have also been appearing in other forms for the spiritual deliverance of eclipsed souls. Such an entity as the spiritual realm really exists. The holy places of India have not been invested with the reputation of sanctity on account of the exuberant fancy of a highly emotional people. Those holy places are agencies of God which may appease our earth-hunger by making their service, as agents of God, available to us.

Sree Chaitanya was born in such a spiritual India and won recognition as a teacher of the service of God in conformity with the records and traditions of spiritual India.

Only comparatively recently has the reality of India's spiritual heritage began to be suspected in Europe and America. This awakening of interest in spiritual India cannot be said to be due to the researches of Western Indologists, trained in the modern method of historical and

philosophical investigations. The Baconian method has been strikingly successful in the sphere of physical and mental research. But it is not suitable for determining the right interpretation of the Scriptures. For this reason the conclusions reached by the modern investigators regarding the spiritual content of the religious literature of India have proved utterly disappointing. The subject requires to be treated by the method that is appropriate to the case.

THE END

THE GEETA

As a Chaitanyite Reads it

BY

TRIDANDI SWAMI B. H. BON

PUBLISHED BY

THE POPULAR BOOK DEPOT

Lamington Road, Bombay 7.

Pages 408, Price : Rs. 5/- or 8sh. 6d net.

The Amrita Bazar Patrika, Calcutta : "The present volume offers an opportunity to the world to have an insight into the devotional outlook of the theistic aspect of Hinduism as embodied in the Geeta.....The introductory chapter of the publication will serve as an eye-opener to many readers of the Geeta."

The Hindu Outlook, New Delhi : "Since the time when the Holy Geeta was preached by the blessed Lord Himself on the battlefield of Kurukshetra there has been an unending overflow of commentaries on this monumental work and every one of the great commentators has tried to put his own meaning to it. Some hold that Karma is the object lesson of Sri Krishna, while others enjoin either Brahma Jnana, or Para Bhakti to be the real purposes of

the Geeta. The present work is written by an author of the Chaitanya School and hence it is devoted mainly to the devotional aspect of the Geeta. In this volume an explanatory translation of the Geeta is given in English and in his translation the learned author has followed the commentaries of Sri Viswanath Chakkravarty, Valadeva Vidyabhusan and Srila Thakur Bhaktivinode, the pioneers of the revival of Bhakti cult in Bengal.....The book will, no doubt, offer the reader with ample information about the theistic aspects of Hinduism as distinct from the monistic understanding of an Impersonal God of Shri Shankara. This useful and instructive book, however, suffers from one or two serious drawbacks to which we cannot but draw the attention of the learned author and the publishers for future improvement. There is nowhere the number of the verses given in the book.....May we hope that due attention will be paid to our suggestions."

The Hindu, Madras :.....The Swamiji tells in the Introductions that his explanatory translation is based on the commentary of Sri Viswanatha Chakravarty. It would have been better if the simple text and the soul-stirring commentary had been given separately.It is natural that a Chaitanyite version of the Geeta should make the Bhakti element in the scripture predominant. There is no doubt that the Gita, being a layman's Upanished and a theistic scripture, makes surrender to a personal God the core of its teaching. It is interesting to notice that there are several references in the Gita to what is called a secret doctrine and to find out what exactly the secret is.....But

the Bhakti taught by the Gita is a well-balanced Bhakti. The great Teacher does not, in any way, belittle Karma and Jnana or any aspect of spiritual life in the way in which the later Bhakti schools do. What would He say to Tridandi Swami's statement ?—"Prema-Bhakti is not tinged by the baseness of the rind of fruitive Karma and the seed of dry Jnana. Prema-Bhakti is like a sweet ripe fruit which has no rind and no seed."

The Occult Review, London : As with the Christian Bible, so with the Hindu Bhagavad Gita : this may be read exoterically or esoterically. The author of the present translation has interpreted the Gita on the basis of the philosophy and teachings of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. The Chaitanya religion is devotional and evangelical almost to the point of identity with the worship of Christ. The present translation should therefore appeal particularly to Western students of Indian thought.

Printed and published in Bombay, this volume is a very creditable production, a decided advance on the usual level of Indian books.

LEON ELSON.

Sir M. N. Mukherji, Kt. : "আপনার গীতার অহুবাদ আমি কয়েকটা স্থান (যাহা আমার অপেক্ষাকৃত ভাল জানা আছে) পাঠ করিয়া মুগ্ধ হইয়াছি। আপনি অতিশয় প্রাঞ্জল ভাবায় যথার্থ ভাবে এমন অহুবাদ করিয়াছেন যে, এমন কি অতিশয় সাধারণ রকমের পাঠকের পক্ষেও শ্লোকগুলির প্রকৃত মর্ম সহজবোধ্য হইয়াছে।

অধ্যাতি করিয়া লিখিতে হইবে বলিয়া যে একথা লিখিলাম তাহা নহে—আপনার পুস্তকখানি পাঠ করিবার সময় আমার মনে সত্য সত্য যে কথা উদয় হইয়াছে, তাহাই লিখিলাম জানিবেন।”

Sir P. S. Sivaswami Aiyer, K. C. S. I. etc. : “I have read your introduction and looked at your translation. The Gita has been interpreted by numerous commentators and various schools of religious and philosophical thought in India. There are many followers of Sri Chaitanya in Bengal and perhaps elsewhere in India. Your book should be welcome to the followers of the Chaitanya school of thought and to others who, though unable to read the commentaries of Visvanatha Chakravarty and others in Bengalee, are interested in the study of the interpretation of the Gita according to this school. The Gita lends itself to interpretation by the various schools according to their own system of thought and even by different individuals according to their own lights and opinions. No commentator can claim to have said the last word on the Gita. The view that the Gita is intended to emphasise Bhaktimarga and that the the Karmamarga and the Jnanamarga are not in conflict with it but admit of a synthesis is a perfectly tenable one and finds support in several passages. The emphasis which a student of the Gita places upon one or the other of the three paths is largely dependent upon the temperament and inclinations of the reader. *Your introduction is valuable and takes one along many lines of thought.*

The Maharajadhiraja Bahadur of Burdwan, G. C. I. E., K. C. S. I., etc., "The book has arrived and what little I have seen of it promises to be most interesting reading...knowing however how industrious and thorough you are in your endeavours and how ardently you follow your religion I am sure to find the work of much usefulness."

Mr. B. K. Chatterji (Accountant General, Nagpore) : "I am glad to see 'the Geeta, as a Chaitanyite reads it' by Tridandi Swami B. H. Bon. In the introduction to this book he has explained the point of view from which scholars belonging to his school study the Gita. He has also given a list of the commentaries of the Gita. In this book he has followed the commentaries of Bishwanath Chakravarty and Baladeva Vidyabhusan (who appeared shortly after Sri Chaitanya) and also that of Bhaktibinode Thakur (a modern exponent of Chaitanya religion). The present book is not exactly a translation of the Gita but an elucidation in English according to the philosophy of the Gaudiya Math. The author is a well known writer and speaker on Vaishnava religion. The book is well written. It reveals the author's power of grasping and exposition. The get-up of the book is all that can be desired. We hope that the book will prove useful to English reading public who take interest in religious subjects."

Dewan Bahadur Har Bilas Sarda : "I have read parts of your excellent book on Geeta. The English

rendering is admirable. At times it is abstruse ; at places very difficult to comprehend not because of the language but because of the extremely difficult nature of the idea..."

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Mr. Diali Ram Chopra, B.A. : "The valuable copy of your book on the Gita will be a very interesting reading to the pilgrims visiting the Institution (Shri Kurukshetra Restoration Society). I feel sanguine to hope that you will take interest in the noble and sacred cause of our religion by way of such publications."

Mr. H. P. Vidyaratna, M.A. : "I have gone through your most valuable treatise on the Gita with rapt attention and a feeling of beatific delight attending thereon. This excellent book will do immense benefit to that section of the people of the world who have a devotional turn of mind, yet cannot go through the truly devotional exposition of a book at once most popular and widely read for their want of knowledge of the Sanskrit and Bengali languages in which the Bhakti cult are mostly written. You have really filled in a great gap and removed a great want of the world-wide reading public by allowing them a glimpse into the true teachings of His Divine Lordship Sri Krishna. Your book seems to have done ample justice

to the commentaries of the Gita by the Bengal school of Bharkti cult...Your valuable Introduction has been, it must be admitted by all right-thinking men of an unbiased turn of mind, a most useful asset in the treasure-trove of the devotional school of literature. There is reason to hope that the Name of Sri Krisna-Chaitanya will be broadcasted through the length and breadth of the world by publications like the present one, at once popular, handy and replete with truth."

Prof. J. N. Sikdar, M.A: ".....গীতার ইংরাজী পদ্মাবাদ পাইয়া বড়ই প্রীত হইলাম। ভূমিকা পড়িয়া নূতন দৃষ্টিতে গীতার তাৎপর্য অন্বেষণ করিবার চেষ্টা করিলাম। ভূমিকাটি পাণ্ডিত্য-পূর্ণ হইয়াছে। অব্যবহিক কিছু কিছু পড়িয়াছি। গীতার দুঃস্বপ্নে সহজ ইংরাজীতে প্রাঞ্জল করিয়া প্রকাশ করিবার চেষ্টা সফল হইয়াছে দেখিয়া মুগ্ধ হইলাম। ইংরাজী পাঠকদের নিকট এই গীতার অব্যবহিক আদর পাইবে তাহাতে সন্দেহ নাই।"

Dr. O. B. L. Kapoor, M.A., D. Phil : "I have had opportunity to look more closely into your work on the Geeta. It is, so far as I can see, a faithful interpretation of the Geeta text from the view point of Sree Chaitanya, and you have no doubt rendered a great service to the English reading public by producing it. The views of Sree Chaitanya are little known to the people outside Bengal even to this day and your book will certainly serve to make all those interested in the personality of Sree Chaitanya familiar with his philosophical and theological ideas—all

the more so because the style of your book is so simple and easy flowing...the intrinsic value of the work, which all religious minded persons will read with interest and appreciate."

Dr. S. Das, M.A., Ph. D., Barrister-at-Law : "I have much pleasure in expressing my great appreciation of Svami Vana's explanatory translation of the Gita following the commentaries of the Gaudiya Vaisnava Masters. Svamiji's attempt in placing in his simple and direct language before the English knowing Gita-loving public the Gaudiya Vaisnavite view of the Gita deserves our heartiest congratulations. The general readers as well as the students of religions will derive much from this nice edition.

Dr. D. L. Barnett, D. Litt. : "The work is an able exposition of the sacred text as interpreted by the Chaitanya School, and as such is highly instructive."

Sir Frank Brown, C. I. E. : "I am not sufficiently versed in the ancient literature of India to be able to compare this translation with the original Sanskrit ; but I can see from the short time I have had for any perusal of the work that you have entered deeply into the spirit of this great gem of Vedic literature. I look forward to some happy half hours reading it over the fire-side, and I congratulate you upon discharging so well the labour of love required for the translation."

বেদের পরিচয়

ত্রিদিগ্‌তিস্বামী শ্রীমদ্বক্তৃহৃদয় বন-প্রণীত

দি বুক কোম্পানী লিমিটেড

৪১৩বি, কলেজ স্কোয়ার, কলিকাতা

বর্ধক প্রকাশিত

মূল্য তিন টাকা

মহামহোপাধ্যায় শ্রীবিষ্ণুশেখর ভট্টাচার্য্য শাস্ত্রী, কলিকাতা
বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়ের সংস্কৃতির প্রধান অধ্যাপক—“ব্রহ্মস্পদেষু,

আপনার বইখানি (বেদের পরিচয়) আমি পড়িয়া দেখিয়াছি।
ইহাতে অনেক ভাল কথা আছে। ইহা পড়িয়া পাঠকের
উপকার হইবে।”

স্যার মঙ্গলনাথ মুখোপাধ্যায়—“হিন্দুজাতির ও হিন্দুধর্মের
এই যুগ-সঙ্কীর্ণে ‘বেদের পরিচয়’এর আবির্ভাব মহা মঙ্গলের সূচনা।
এই মহামূল্য গ্রন্থের ভূমিকা রচনা বাহুল্য মাত্র। অত্যাশ্চর্য্য হীরকখণ্ডের
পরিচয় দিবার ক্ষমতা ভূমিকার প্রয়োজন হয় না। বেদের ঐতিহাসিকতা,
তাহার সাহিত্য ও কাব্যরূপ, তাহার বিজ্ঞান ও ধর্ম্মগতীয় সকল তথ্যই
এই আলোচ্য গ্রন্থখানিতে অতি সূক্ষ্মভাবে বিচার-বিশ্লেষণপূর্ব্বক
আলোচিত হইয়াছে।”

শ্রীযুক্ত বসন্তকুমার চট্টোপাধ্যায়, এম্, এ, একাউন্টেন্ট-
জেনারেল—“প্রিয় স্বামীজি-আপনার প্রণীত ‘বেদের পরিচয়’ গ্রন্থখানি
পাইয়া বিশেষ আনন্দিত হইলাম। এই পুস্তকখানিতে আপনার

অগাধ পাণ্ডিত্য এবং গভীর গবেষণার পরিচয় পাওয়া যায়। ভারতবর্ষে পাশ্চাত্য-শিক্ষিত অনেক বিদ্বান্ আত্মকাল বেদের আলোচনা করিয়া খ্যাতি লাভ করিয়াছেন। কিন্তু হুংখের বিষয় তাঁহাদের মধ্যে অধিকাংশ ব্যক্তিই পাশ্চাত্য পণ্ডিতগণের নির্দিষ্ট পন্থা নির্বিচারে অনুসরণ করিয়া থাকেন। আপনি যে সে বিপদ হইতে উদ্ধার লাভ করিয়াছেন, এতদ্ব্যতীত আপনাকে আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন জানাইতেছি। ব্যাস-বাণীকি-মহু-যাজ্ঞবল্ক্য-শঙ্কর-রামানুজ প্রভৃতি মহাপুরুষগণ তপস্কার প্রভাবে, বেদের অর্থ যে ভাবে অবগত হইয়াছিলেন তাহাই সত্য, পাশ্চাত্য পণ্ডিতগণ অশেষ বিঘ্ন লাভ করিয়াও আধ্যাত্মিক সাধনার অভাবে তাহা বুঝিতে পারেন নাই। হিন্দুমাত্রই এই কথা বিশ্বাস করিবেন। আপনার হৃদয় গ্রন্থে সেই প্রাচীন ধারার পরিচয় পাইয়া বড় আনন্দ লাভ করিলাম।

পুরুষসূক্তের স্ত্রীসিদ্ধ একাদশ ঋকের ব্যাখ্যায় আপনি লিখিয়াছেন যে……এ বিষয়ে শ্রুতির প্রমাণ অতি স্পষ্ট। সাতিশর পাণ্ডিত্য এবং বিলক্ষণ বিচার-শক্তির দ্বারা আপনি মহুসংহিতা, ভগবদ্গীতা, গৃহসূত্র, মহাভাষ্য প্রভৃতি গ্রন্থ হইতে প্রমাণ উদ্ধৃত করিয়া আপনার সিদ্ধান্ত অকাট্যভাবে স্থাপন করিয়াছেন। ইহা আপনার অসাধারণ সত্যানু-সন্ধিসংসা এবং সৎসাহসের পরিচায়ক। …… বলা বাহুল্য আপনি এ বিষয়ে যে মত প্রকাশ করিয়াছেন, মহাপ্রভুর মত তাহাই। কারণ তিনি সম্পূর্ণভাবে শ্রুতি-স্মৃতির মতই অনুসরণ করিয়াছিলেন।

আপনার এই উৎকৃষ্ট পুস্তকের জন্য আপনাকে অভিনন্দন করিতেছি। আশা করি আপনি বক্তৃতাকে এতাদৃশ আরও পুস্তক রচনা করিয়া মুদ্রিত করিবেন।”

রায় বাহাদুর খগেন্দ্রনাথ মিত্র, এম-এ, কলিকাতা বিশ্ব-বিদ্যালয়ের বক্তৃতাবার প্রধান অধ্যাপক—“.....আপনার এই যথার্থ পাণ্ডিত্যপূর্ণ অধ্যবসায়ের প্রতি যাহাতে সাধারণের সশ্রদ্ধ দৃষ্টি আকৃষ্ট হয়, আমি তাহার চেষ্টা করিব।”

মিঃ উমেশচন্দ্র বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায়—“আপনার বেদের পরিচয় পড়িলাম। বেশ পরিষ্কার ভাষায় লেখা ও সুন্দর ছাপা হইয়াছে।পুরুষমূর্ত্তের বন-ব্যাখ্যা খুব সুন্দর হইয়াছে।

আপনি যদি বেদ শিক্ষার ব্যবস্থা করেন এবং নিজে শিক্ষা দিতে পারেন, আমার বিশ্বাস বহু শিক্ষিত ব্রাহ্মণ-সন্তান যোগ দিবেন। আপনি সামবেদীয় ব্রাহ্মণ-সন্তান। সামবেদ যদি বাঙ্গালা ভাষাতে লেখেন, তাহা হইলে বেশ চলিবেক। বোধহয় অনেক উপনিষদ-পুরাণ-তন্ত্রগ্রন্থ নাগরী-অক্ষরে বাহির হইয়াছে। এখনও সেই সব পুস্তকগুলি বাঙ্গালা ভাষাতে ছাপা হয় নাই। Sacred Books of Hindu Series করিয়া সেইগুলি বাহির করিলে বোধ হয় অনেক গ্রাহক হইবেক—কারণ এক্ষণে লোকের হৃদয়ে ধর্ম্মভাব পুনরায় জাগরিত হইতেছে।”

Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherji, Kt. :.....“Several gentlemen here have read your book (**Veder Parichaya**) taking it from me and they all speak highly of it.”

Mr. J. N. Basu, M. A. Moderate Leader : “...The book deals with a very important subject dealing as it does with the main spring that gave the first impulse to our intellectual and spiritual culture. It is a subject of engrossing interest. I have no doubt the

book will be widely appreciated, written as it is in our own language and in a pleasant style."

Amrita Bazar Patrika : "In this book the author has tried to make the readers of the Bengali literature somewhat acquainted with the Vedas—Vedas, in which according to the Bhagavatam, even the most highly accomplished savants find themselves completely bewildered....The printing, paper and get-up of the book are satisfactory. The author is to be thanked for his strictly adhering to the orthodox principles in dealing with subjects like the origin of the Vedas, their self-evidentness and the four Varnas."

আনন্দ বাজার পত্রিকা—"উত্তম কাগজে মুদ্রিত এই গ্রন্থে, লেখক বেদ সম্বন্ধে তাঁহার মণ্ডলীর দিক হইতে আলোচনা করিয়াছেন। তত্ত্বপিপাসু ব্যক্তিরা ইহার সমাদর করিবেন, এবং বাঙ্গালাদেশে বেদালোচনার সূত্রপাত হইবে.....।"

বন্ধুসমীক্ষা—"বঙ্গদেশে বেদের চর্চা যে অধিক আছে, তাহা বলা যায় না। বেদ বিরাট ও ছুরবগাহ। ইহা হিন্দুধর্মের ভিত্তি বলিলে অত্যুক্তি হয় না। অধ্যাপক ম্যাক্সমুলার সরলভাবে বেদের পরিচয় দিয়াছেন—কিন্তু বাঙ্গালায় বেদের কোন সংক্ষিপ্ত পরিচয়-গ্রন্থ নাই। এই পুস্তকে সেই অভাব দূর হইবে। সেইজন্য পুস্তকখানি আদরীয়।..."

WORKS

By

Tridandi Swami B.H. Bon

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